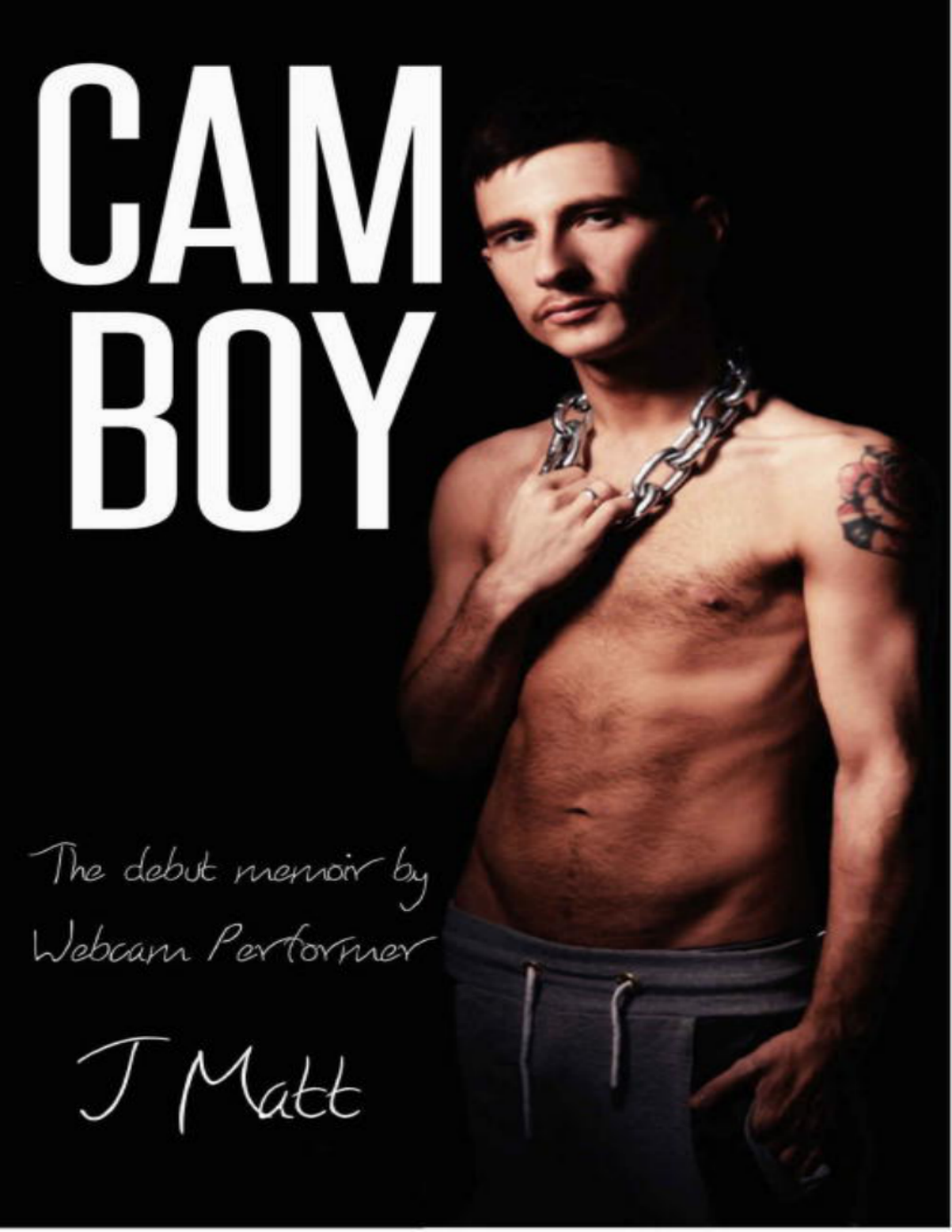
CAM BOY



The debut memoir by
Webcam Performer

J Matt

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Annotation

Join 23-year-old webcam performer Joseph (or J Matt, as he's known to his fans) as he shares his experiences working in a billion dollar industry that so many men and women are a part of, and yet so few are willing to discuss…

In his debut memoir 'Cam Boy', J lifts the lid on what it's like to put on adult shows in front of a webcam for an audience of total strangers, and shares a selection of helpful tips and tricks on what it takes to be a top ranking online performer!

Expect a raw and honest insight in to his past as a drug addicted escort working the streets of London, and a behind the scenes look at J's participation in the documentary 'Webcam Boys', including the backlash and criticism he faced following its broadcast, and the shattered family relationships he attempts to rebuild as a result…

At times shocking, and at other times humorous; J really doesn't hold back when it comes to discussing the less than glamorous aspects of his chosen profession, and through personal diary extracts shares his doubts and insecurities, all whilst documenting his rise to the top!

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J Matt
CAM BOY
MEMOIR OF AN ONLINE SEX WORKER

Introduction

My name is Joseph, and I'm 23 years old.

*You may know me as **J Matt**, or **JMatt93**. I've had a lot of success in the industry of male webcamming – and if you don't know me already from my X-rated online shows, then you may have seen me featured on the recent **BBC3** documentary '**Webcam Boys**' or perhaps viewed my photographs and some of my articles or interviews, both online and in print.*

The story you are about to read is as true to life as I am able to tell it. Some locations and names have been changed to protect the privacy and identities of those involved. Not that some of them honestly deserve it in my opinion – but as this isn't an exposé or kiss and tell book I don't think the exact details are truly that important, and I'm not going to risk landing myself in hot water or adding fuel to the fire when I'm attempting to move on from my troubled past, and the negative people that surrounded me at the time.

My aim with this book is to explain what it was that led me to a career in camming, my experiences with it – both positive and negative (embarrassing too at times!) and to offer some tips and guidance geared towards anyone who is seriously considering becoming a cam boy, or a cam girl themselves.

I hope you enjoy reading it.

Love to all my fans,

ONE – Big Little Me

You wouldn't be entirely wrong in saying that I first started camming from the age of 11 or 12. And by camming, yes, I *do* mean flopping my dick out in front of a webcam and wanking till I came. Though I certainly wasn't hustling for money back then, it was more just a way of exploring my sexuality without the physical intimacy and all the scary 'touchy, feely bits' of being close to another man.

In case you're interested, I didn't lose my 'official' virginity till I was on the edge of 16. Out of respect for him, as we're still fairly good friends, I wont mention his name here, but lets just say it was nothing remarkably special.

So my first 'cyber' sexual experience came courtesy of **PalTalk** – a web chat program which gave you direct access to a huge variety of different chat rooms, both video and audio – Karaoke, Stand up Comedy, File sharing, Bingo Callouts, and finally, '**Men Seeking Men**' and '**Women Seeking Women**'. I don't know if it's actually still running, but **PalTalk** was light years ahead of it's time – long before **YouNow**, **Chatroulette** or **Cam4** *ever* took the internet by storm!

There was a small catch in that you had to be 18 before you were granted access to these particular rooms, but I *certainly* wasn't about to let a little snag like that hold me back. Honestly, I don't think the moderators at the time were all that concerned in taking down paedophiles, and as an internet savvy 12 year old it wasn't hard to lie. Teens lie about their ages all the time online, even to this day. I do appreciate though that there's a lot more information out there about the dangers of being online at such a young age now, and stricter protocols in place than there were back then – and rightfully so! If I had a child I would never want them doing what I did.

I'd signed up to **PalTalk** rather innocently, in search of karaoke or instrumental tracks for me to sing along to. But with puberty kicking in, and myself becoming more and more aware of an attraction towards males, I was a little bit like a kid in a candy store. It seemed that whenever I was horny, the '**Men Seeking Men**' room would always catch my eye, and was the first that I'd log into.

> [**Paltalk User**] Hey Sexy
>
> [**Awkward 12 year old me**] What's up?
>
> [**Paltalk User**] Nm (*Not much*) just playing with my rock hard 9 inch dick, jerking off. Wanna C2C? (*Cam-to-Cam*)
>
> [**Awkward 12 year old me**] Um sure, just gimme a minute

I was working from an old computer that didn't have a built in webcam with it, so I'd begged my dad to buy me an external one.

"And what exactly does a 12 year old need a webcam for?" he asked cynically.

"It'll be just for friends, to chat with over **MSN** and all… nothing dodgy!" I promised him.

Dad was reluctant to begin with – and perhaps on reflection, rightfully so, but after pleading with him relentlessly, he eventually backed down – if only as a means of shutting me up.

It was the cheapest webcam available in the electronics store we visited together, and the picture quality was grainy and pixelated, even when in focus – or as in focus as it could be (this was long before autofocus was a thing so you had to manually crank the rim around the lens to adjust it). Nevertheless, it just about served its purpose.

I'd usually fix it with blue tack to the highest point of my computer monitor and adjust it tilting downwards so that the middle-to-bottom of my face was in frame, with me leaning back in my seat and playing with myself. Then I'd manually move it a little closer to the head of my cock when I felt like I was ready to ejaculate.

"Uh-oh yeah! Fuck yes," headphones pressed tightly against my ears, and this voice coming from *his* end, of course.

I was always super quiet, or would type to other users instead of using the in-built mic, as it was usually late at night. And I wasn't taking *any* chances when it came to waking my parents, or my brother with either my own moans of pleasure, or those of a likely 30-something year old truck driver from America; who must've had a major turn on (*or certainly a hard on, and possibly a wife and family*) for watching underage boys.

I don't think I'd even started to grow body hair by then, and anyone who took one honest look at me would have placed me at no older than 13, and that being generous! Sometimes I still get ID'd when buying cigarettes or alcohol today, just let that sink in for a moment.

I know *now*, and perhaps knew even back then, that the majority of the men viewing my webcam stream were a hell of a lot older than me, but curiously it didn't seem to bother me at all. Honestly, I was just glad that someone, *anyone*, found my body attractive enough to shoot their load over. My pale, pasty white body with its hanging rolls of flab – a belly I was too ashamed to expose in the boys locker room for any more than 10 seconds, if I could help it.

I'd worked out that 10 seconds was just enough time to get my T-shirt off and on again when P.E was over, hoard off the 'fat' jibes, the hollers of "Oi! He's got man boobs!" and get the hell out of there!

And as for swimming lessons? I'm pretty sure I used every trick in

the book to get out of *ever* attending them. To say I was insecure about my body was an understatement, and kids are usually the first to pick up on that sort of thing. As a result, I was bullied mercilessly because of my size, and school was *never* a happy time for me.

The **PalTalk** sessions, if memory serves me correctly, were typically one-on-one, but I suppose realistically anyone could have been watching. Regardless, I only used the site for a few months at best during the summer holidays, and got back to focusing, or more realistically, *trying* to focus on my school work when that period of my life was over.

I suppose I've always been an extrovert. As a child, I had a dressing up box at home filled with all kinds of quirky flamboyant attire I'd acquired from jumble sales and car boot stalls over the years, and loved putting on little shows for the relatives or neighbours whenever I got the chance – or more often than not, whenever I could convince them to quit their adult chitter-chatter for 5 minutes (*which was always closer to 15*) just to watch me.

I've forever loved to sing. I'd say I was a born performer, but that sounds a bit arrogant doesn't it? Fuck it. I'm leaving it in there.

My singing voice wasn't, and still isn't half bad – though perhaps a little huskier due to my 20-a-day smoking habit, and certainly a lot lower since my balls dropped (as expected). But it was my dancing in particular that left a lot to be desired – in short, I had all the gracefulness of a bull in a china shop, so more often than not I felt there was a good chance my family and friends were probably laughing *at* me rather than *with* me. It didn't really matter though, I may not have been **Freddie Mercury** or **Michael Jackson**, but what I *did* have was an audience, and that was more than enough to satisfy me at the time.

I guess in a funny kind of way, things haven't really changed all that much. Sure, as a child, I certainly wouldn't be donning BDSM style fetish wear and parading my arse around on webcam, but through my time as a cam boy I've learned to embrace my kinkier side, and still to this day have a forever-expanding dressing up box full of outfits which I love to show off to my viewers.

I forget what's in there half the time because there's *so* much to rumble through, and I'm not the tidiest of people so it frequently ends up all tangled together – but it's essentially made up of leather harnesses, rubber shirts and shorts, latex bodysuits and tight fitting underwear, along with heavy chains and, of course, my trademark

wrestling singlets!

#TIP 1 – WHERE TO BUY FETISH CLOTHING FROM

Leather and rubber gear, if you're looking for quality stuff, can be rather expensive, but believe me it's worth saving up for as you get what you pay for. Go with a trusted brand like **MR B** or **COLT** and you won't regret it, because if you take good care of it it'll last you much longer in the long run. Just be sure to get measured up if it's something that isn't too flexible or 'one size fits all', as if you're investing a lot of money in to something you want it to fit you just right.

By contrast I don't believe any of my singlets have cost me more than £20 at a time and I love each and every single one of them. I'd estimate that I own about 12 now in various colour combinations and materials, from mesh to spandex, but by the time you read this I'll probably have amassed about 30 more or so, due to the nature of my spending habits…

Not all of my singlets are backless, but the ones with a nice round cut out at the arse area are a particular favourite of mine (and my viewers… who'd have thought?) because of the easy access they supply when it comes to any kind of ass play, generally with my trusty big black dildo!

I do the majority of my shopping online when I can because I find gay sex shops to be vastly overpriced an awful lot of the time. **Ebay** and **Amazon** are pretty good but I really recommend **AliExpress** – they have a lot of the exact same stuff only often for much cheaper. The only downside is that all of their stock is shipped from China, so if you're looking for fast delivery you aren't going to get it there. But if you're not in a hurry and have the time to spend browsing you can definitely get some amazing bargains there without breaking the bank – it's a really good place to start!

I can't honestly remember when it was that I very first considered seriously the possibility of being a cam boy for pay. I was, of course, somewhat familiar with the nature of the job. Anyone who watches porn online will have, undoubtedly, come across those fucking

annoying pop up ads that bounce up on your screen – where you see a guy, or more frequently a girl, sat topless in their own little bedroom space, posing seductively into a webcam lens, accompanied by what's usually an invite along the lines of '**Come join me now in my live chat for flirty/sexy/ fun**'.

I still to this day don't know how many of those ads are genuine, or if the footage is even live. Doesn't it seem to always be the *exact* same clip each time on loop!? (*Even the best of cam models aren't always fully engaged 100% of the time and perfectly poised in dazzling HD*!) – Needless to say I was aware of the occupation and thought I had a pretty good idea of what it entailed.

TWO – Losing it in London

I don't wish to bore you with all of the insignificant details of my growing up, but for my story to make sense I'm going to have to give you a little back history so you're at least more familiar with some of the characters in my life, and the position I was in, in the months and years leading up to my decision to take up camming full time…

In **2013**, I'd moved out of the family home where I grew up in Monmouthshire, rural Wales, to live with my boyfriend Christos in North London – a 3 hour drive away. It was an incredibly rushed decision looking back on things, especially after only having shared a few dates together…

"Y'know I'm getting this new flat at the start of next month," he turned and said to me one night in his thick cockney accent. We were sitting in Soho's notorious '**G-A-Y Bar**', sipping from glasses of Jack Daniels and coke. "Why don't you move in with me?"

I was 19 years old at the time. He was in his 30's – tall and olive skinned with jet black hair and a muscular physique. I'd initially met him on a birthday celebration night out with an old friend of mine. He'd introduced himself and bought me a drink at the bar, and afterwards we'd exchanged numbers. I was straight out of college, didn't really know quite what to do with myself, and frankly, was desperate to move away from the boring old countryside life I'd become so accustomed to. I suppose ultimately, I was in search of a change of scenery and a fresh adventure; so the prospect of moving to the big city was a *massive* deal for me.

Plus, he was my first *real* boyfriend. I mean, I certainly wasn't a virgin and I'd had my fair share of one night stands, but I don't think I'd ever been *truly* in love before meeting Christos. He was *ever* the charmer and, cliché as it may sound, swept me right off my feet.

Christos and I shared a ground floor studio apartment not far from **High Barnet**. I say shared, but it was his name on the tenancy agreement, and I wasn't *really* supposed to be staying there long term at all. When we first moved in, he was working as a painter and decorator for his older brother's construction company, and the work they were carrying out at the time was right on the far side of London. That particular job meant a *lot* of very early starts for him in the morning. It wasn't at all uncommon for him to roll out of bed at 5am and be out the door by 6 – he was *incredibly* dedicated to his work, and I certainly can't fault him in any way for that.

Chilling out for Christos and I (at least in the beginning), usually meant snuggling up in bed together in the evening, and smoking a joint or two – all the while stuffing ourselves silly on Doritos, Sour

Cream and Chive Dip, and Dairy Milk bars, washed down with gallons upon gallons of Coca-Cola. We'd usually put on '**Family Guy**' – a comedy favourite of both of ours, and find ourselves laughing *so* hysterically at times, much like a couple of hyenas, that the girl who lived in the flat above would be stomping her heels on our ceiling (her floor) – or screaming from the top of the staircase banister at us to "Keep the fucking noise down!" – Naturally though, that only made things all the more hilarious. *Why is it that everything seems so funny when you're stoned?*

As time went on, I began to feel increasingly lonely and frustrated, being stuck at home for most of the day with so very little to do. With only four walls for company, it's easy to go a little stir crazy – and though I was job hunting from the onset, I wasn't having much luck in finding anything stable, or that I was suitably qualified for. In essence, I'd packed up my entire life in to a suitcase, and left behind all that was safe and familiar to me, to live with a man who I hardly even knew and saw so little of. Phone calls from my mum helped the days pass by a little quicker, and I'd try my best to get out and about and see as much of the city as I could – but there were places I wanted Christos and I to explore together, and experiences I longed to share with him. After all, we were supposed to be a couple.

To anybody looking in on our relationship objectively, it would certainly appear that I had it easy – Christos was the breadwinner, the one that was working hard each day to 'bring home the bacon' so to speak and provide for the two of us, whereas *I* had the opportunity to lounge around the flat all day in my pyjamas, nap, watch movies, and come and go as I pleased.

But it was never that straightforward…

I remember a conversation we had before he left for work one Friday. I'm a very light sleeper, so as Christos would be up getting himself ready for another day of climbing ladders, laying down sheets and rolling paint on to walls, more often than not I too would be awake. The sun had yet to even rise, but he was particularly energetic that morning – manic even.

"Payday today!" he said gleefully, whilst changing into his overalls, and waiting for the kettle to boil so he could grab himself a quick black coffee.

"Mmhm," I said sleepily, "And what does that mean?"

"It *means* Joey – *we're* going out to *celebrate* this weekend!"

"Celebrate what?" I asked.

"Celebrate gettin' *paid*! I've decided I'm gonna treat us both – we'll 'ave a *proper* nice meal in the West End, somewhere *real* classy. Fancy that, *yeah*? Then… well *then* we're both gonna go out for drinks. I know a *proper* posh nightclub, I ain't taken you there yet, but

I'm tellin' you already, you're gonna *love* it. *See*, we gotta have money in our pockets to go these places Joey, we can't just turn up empty 'anded like a pair of *scroungers*!"

My parents had always taught me the value of money, and though what he was proposing sounded thoroughly entertaining to say the least, I couldn't help but think that that money of his could be spent *much* more wisely if he'd only learn to budget it. *Why did he have to be so flash*? *What point was he trying to prove?*

The flat was still, for the most part, largely unfurnished. We didn't have curtains, nor a sofa, and the fridge was bare but for a tub of butter and some milk. I worried that with his grandiose plans for the weekend, the money he'd worked *so* hard to earn wouldn't be enough to see us through the rest of the week. But I didn't feel like I was in an appropriate position to say anything, simply because it wasn't my pay cheque.

"What time will you be home today?" I asked.

"About 5, all bein' well," Christos replied. "I need to get some new shoes and maybe a nice jacket or somethin', so be ready to leave when I get back. We'll get a bit of shoppin' in, then I'm takin' you to Soho."

"I don't have any money on my Oyster card," I said, suddenly remembering. "I'll need to top it up."

"*Listen* Joey," he said, perching on the edge of a table chair and looking me directly in the eye, as if he was about to bestow upon me some wise, powerful words of wisdom. "When you 'ave *money* you don't *need* to get the *bus* – I'll be payin' for us a taxi."

I could see his eyes light up at the prospect.

"Yeah, *that's right* – we'll pull up in *style!*"

He'd barely stopped for breath, and was now practically dancing around the room, giddy with excitement and anticipation – high on the mere *thought* of having money in his wallet.

"Right, I best be off then!" he said, swigging down the last of his coffee. "Make sure the flat's tidy when I get back, yeah?"

"I will," I mumbled from under the covers. "See ya later."

"Bye," he said, leaning down to give me a quick peck on the cheek.

I heard the door close behind him, and rolled over. It was back to sleep for me.

I managed to get a few more hours rest, before hopping out of bed to partake in my standard 'morning coffee and a roll-up' routine at the kitchen table. Next, I threw on a hoody and some sweat pants, locked the flat door behind me, and made the short walk across the road to pick up a newspaper at the local corner shop.

Christos had left me with a few quid to get by on for the day

whilst I waited for him to return home, so I spent the rest of it on a cheap Sainsbury's pizza, a full-sized carton of apple juice and a bag of oatmeal cookies. I then headed back to the flat to tidy up – cleaning the dishes, sweeping the crumbs and stray strands of tobacco off the floor, and wiping down the surfaces where there were coffee-cup and ketchup stains. I felt satisfied that I'd managed to do a decent enough job of it.

5pm came, and there was no sign of Christos yet. This wasn't unusual. Honestly, my own time keeping skills are pretty poor to say the least, so it would be highly hypocritical of me to judge him for being a little late travelling back, *especially* in London, *and* at rush hour.

But when **6pm** rolled round, and I still hadn't heard from him, I began to feel a little anxious. I dialled his number.

"*This person's phone is switched off.*"

I rang it again. Nothing. Nothing but the same automated message.

I tried to reassure myself that he'd just been held up somewhere and his phone battery had gone flat. I told myself that something completely trivial had probably cropped up, and that he'd arrive back home safe and sound, or somehow be in touch, any second now. But I just couldn't help myself from watching the clock – nor could I shake the feelings of uneasiness that rattled within the pit of my stomach.

By **9pm** I'd still yet to hear a peep out of him, and was starting to unravel; pacing around the flat, a bundle of nerves. His phone had remained switched off the entire time, and though I'd tried to call it over and over, I knew deep down that it was a pointless exercise. *I just didn't know what else to do*. Having chain smoked my way through all my fags, I was now picking apart at the butts in the ash tray, scraping the recycled shreds of tobacco together, and in to a stray rizla paper to spark up and smoke. Had things *really* come to this?

All of a sudden I heard the front door of the building slam open and heavy footsteps just outside the entrance to our flat. I listened as a key turned clockwise in the door, and Christos burst in – still in his painting overalls, looking angry and dishevelled, sweat dripping from his forehead.

"What happened?" I asked.

"Don't ask Joey. Don't *fuckin'* ask!"

It was a relief to see him after all the fretting and worrying I'd been doing in his absence, but I'll admit to being more than a little taken a-back, and startled by his demeanour.

"Make me a roll-up Joey," he ordered.

"There's no tobacco left," I said meekly. "You've been gone for hours."

"What, so *you* fuckin' went an' smoked *all* of it did ya? *Great. Fuckin' great!*"

"I thought you were meant to be getting paid today," I said.

"Yeah, *well*… I blew it!"

"What?" – I didn't understand.

"I took a chance," he said. "Went in the bettin' shop didn't I?"

"You *can't* have blown it *all.*"

"£500," he said flatly. "Gone."

Now I was *really* starting to panic. I'd been attempting to remain calm because I could see that he was visibly stressed, but this was something that Christos knew full well affected *both* of us. I knew that making conversation with him in that moment was like walking on eggshells, but I could feel the anger towards him rising up within me, and hard as I tried, I simply couldn't hold back my own rage any longer.

"Why the *fuck* would you do that?" I cried.

"Don't bust my fuckin' balls over this Joey!" he shot back. "I fucked up *alright*? I don't see *you* gettin' up at 5 to go *fuckin'* work all day so shut you're fuckin' mouth alright? *Make me a rollup!*"

"I told you already," I said. "We don't *have* any tobacco."

He kicked the wardrobe in frustration, and stood in the centre of the room, pointing his finger directly at me, and staring with a look of menace in his eyes.

"*You…"* he began *"'*ad *better* get on the phone to your mum and 'ave her send you some money."

"What? That's not *fair*!" I yelled.

"Do *you* wanna go fuckin' *starvin'* all week? With no *fuckin*' tobacco? Coz *I* don't."

"It's not *my* fault you went in the betting shop!" I argued. "You had more than enough for us to get by on – why would you even *think* to do that? And what about all that shit you were going on about this morning? I thought *you* wanted to go *out* tonight!"

"Well that ain't 'appenin anymore," he said. "And I ain't bein' without any *fuckin'* money any longer. So either *you* do somethin' about it, or I'm leavin' – and I'll be keepin' my phone off, so you ain't gonna see or hear from me!"

It was hard to discern if his ranting and raving was as calculated as it seemed to be, or if he was just running his mouth for the sake of it – but, intentionally or not, he'd struck a nerve and hit my weak spot. I saw barely *any* of him as it was, and I'd told him how lost I felt when he wasn't around – the thought of him leaving me in that flat alone any longer than he needed to for his work commitments was too much to bear.

And so, in I caved. I convinced my mum to transfer me **£100** with

some phony made up story, and Christos and I struggled, but just about managed, to get ourselves through the rest of the week…

If it had just been the one occasion this had happened, I might have been able to forgive him and let it go, but all too frequently Christos would blow his earnings (or whatever cash he had) in one of the West End's many Casinos – or more often than not, at the local **William Hill**. Virtual Roulette was his favourite, though I've no idea why – rarely did he ever win at it. When he wasn't gambling, he'd be spending so frivolously, that before he even realised it we were broke once more.

Cash Converters was another of Christos's favourite old haunts. I remember the time he pawned our widescreen Television set – the one he'd been *so* proud to display to any guests of ours when he'd first gone out and purchased it. A little piece of me died that day. Without our TV, the flat felt colder, and emptier than ever before.

I couldn't keep asking my mum for money, so he'd push me towards applying for Payday loans. His own credit score was too poor to be accepted for *any* of them, but under my name, it was surprisingly easy to get approved. I didn't have a job, so had no realistic way of making the repayments when the time came, but the online application process was like painting-by-numbers. I lied and said I worked at **Waitrose**, looked up the relevant telephone numbers and employee salary, and had the cash in my bank account the following day. *Ka-ching!*

When the time came to pay it back, I was inundated with phone calls and threats, as the interest rate rose higher and higher by the day. Christos didn't seem at all that bothered, and told me to brush it off, but I'd *always* been sensible with my money, and evading their phone calls, fearing how, or even *if* I would ever be able to pay them back, caused me a lot of added stress and anguish.

Living with Christos was a rollercoaster of highs and lows, and an experience I would *never* wish to relive again. It wasn't just the gambling. Cheating, resentment, and arguments that at times had escalated in to full blown physical fights had driven an enormous wedge between us, and the spark had long since fizzled out. Christos had made it clear one evening that he no longer harboured any feelings towards me, either sexually or romantically, and after two years of living together, I felt much the same way. He wasn't the man I'd fallen in love with.

The realisation that my relationship was over was an absolutely *devastating* blow for me, but there was no conceivable way I could see of righting all the wrongs between us, as there were simply far too many by the end. And so – with a heavy heart, I made the decision to pack my bags and return back home to life once more with my family.

I *loathed* being back home in Monmouthshire. Moving out for the first time is a big step in any young adult's life, and I felt like a massive failure taking what felt like such a giant leap backwards for me at the mere age of 21.

I was battling depression, had gained a significant amount of weight due partly to the stress of the relationship break up, and my own lack of willpower to do anything about it, and had seemingly no career prospects, or much of anything positive to put my focus in to at all. On top of that I felt like I'd abandoned the vast majority of friends I'd had before moving (most of whom were at university now or had settled down and had kids of their own) – having put *all* my faith and trust into making my relationship with Christos work.

Despite all the chaos that ensued during my years living in London with Christos, I did manage to hold down a few small-time jobs – the odd painting and decorating gig alongside him, flyer boy outside '**Bar Salsa**' in the West End, and a work-from-home job I took on as a '**Content Writer**' for a Children's Bouncy Castle company, which was a lot of work for little payout.

Regarding the writer's position, I eventually stopped putting as much time and effort in to my articles because I wasn't getting credited properly, and frankly, I just got lazy. In the thick of my depression, the mounting stress I was under, and what felt like a fairy-tale romance that had completely lost it's magic, I couldn't summon up the words, meet the deadlines or come up with anything really relevant to the brief they'd given me (*in all honesty, Children's Party Planning pieces were never exactly my forte anyway*) – needless to say my agent fired me… via email no less!

And so it came to be that I signed on at the dole office every Monday back in Monmouthshire, took solace, as before, in food, television and the internet, and generally sat around sullen and miserable in my 8 by 10 foot childhood bedroom. My thoughts would be drifting as I turned things over and over in my head, and wondered to myself where exactly it had all gone wrong, and what I could've, or should've done differently, if given the opportunity again.

I found myself growing increasingly nostalgic as the weeks and months passed by. Not for my relationship with Christos (I'd come to accept that that was over now) – but for London itself, a city that, for all its flaws, I was still in love with, *mesmerised* by.

I missed the hustle and bustle of city life, the ease of getting around, the sense of excitement and unpredictability that lingered in the air, and the sheer diversity of it all. I felt like the chance to experience everything London had to offer had been robbed from me,

and I desperately yearned for another shot at it.

I was fed up of seeing fields upon fields of sheep, of rickety old buses that passed by every two hours and stopped running at 6 in the evening, and of access to a single corner shop that was vastly overpriced, and shut at 7pm, or even worse – 5 on a Sunday.

I simply couldn't take it any more. I *had* to get away!

I still had a few friends of my own (or fuck buddies if you will) that I'd remained in contact with since leaving London and made plans to go and visit them.

I would save up my Jobseekers Allowance for a few weeks in advance so I had enough cash on me to make the trip, and some pocket money to blow through whilst I was there, and slowly I started to revisit London. Only this time around I found myself exploring a much darker side of what the city of opportunity had to offer…

It all began with small trips there and back, partying for a weekend or so and generally having pretty harmless fun. But before I knew it I was hooked on heavy duty drugs and spending longer and longer away from home, and more time with other users. Newly single, I slutted myself around an awful lot to any guy that showed the vaguest of an interest in me (mostly whilst high and usually always unprotected), but *did* manage to sustain a few short term relationships during this time. The last and most toxic being with a fairly big time drug dealer we'll call Nick, who I moved in with within days of meeting, and who fed my insatiable habit for more, all the while pushing me towards getting invested and involved in the business side of drug dealing itself…

It all started rather innocently with "You don't mind doing me a favour and dropping off this order (*usually a few bags of weed or something*) to a guy round the corner for me do you?", to which I obliged. But as the chemicals quickly took a hold of me, both mentally and physically (a typical daily diet consisting of crystal meth, heroin, mephedrone and GBL), before I knew it he had me doing *all* his dirty deeds for him.

I recall feeling coerced into taking part in near cross country runs with suitcases full of money to exchange for drugs with Nick's suppliers (seriously risky business!) and having to deal completely alone with some extremely unsavoury customers of his, while he'd nodded off peacefully in the bedroom.

I remember on countless occasions sitting in his kitchen shooting up middle aged men, who liked the rush but hadn't the patience to learn how to properly inject themselves. By this point I'd fallen into the trap of IV drug use myself and was getting pretty skilled at it (not that that's anything to be proud of). But I always shot up others with tremendous reluctance, thinking to myself time and time again '*when*

the fuck did this become my responsibility?'

I dealt myself a little on the side (only ever class B or C drugs) but was a pretty bad, OK, *a fucking awful* small time dealer; more often than not blowing my way through the bags I'd been meaning to sell, sharing them around nonchalantly at parties or giving them away on 'tick' to hangers-on; – fellow addicts who always swore they were getting paid at midnight and would settle up then. Of course, the money never came…

Not making enough money alone from my dealing, and not feeling at all comfortable doing it in the first place, but still feeling the pressure to contribute towards continuing to live with Nick, I turned to what I figured was my only other option at the time for fast cash – escorting.

Nick and I, though we shared a bed in the evenings, weren't even really having a sexual relationship by this point – I'd just slipped into the role of his drug mule run-around boy and that was that. He'd never suggested that I pimp myself out, that was solely my idea (I figured that I'd slept with enough guys in exchange for drugs in the past that doing the same for cash wasn't all that different), though I made no secret of my pursuits and always made a point of slipping in a line or two to the clients that if they ever wanted chems I knew a great guy and could sort pretty much anything. That kept Nick somewhat happy, and me still somewhat on his leash.

I set up an online profile advertising my services and within days had my first out-call client booked. I advertised myself as a strict bottom (*though in actuality I'm fairly versatile when it comes to sex – I feared my ability to maintain an erection, even with Viagra to hand, in the strung out, withered state my body was in*) – and charged **£50** per hour – though frequently got tipped considerably extra from men who must've either took pity on me, or simply had the cash to spend and found me endearing. For the most part, it was pretty easy money.

Most of my clients were men in their late 30's or 40's who wanted companionship and hadn't had sex in a while, due mostly to recovering from health problems or having low self esteem, and were drawn I think mostly to my youth and willingness to try pretty much anything as far as sex went.

Sometimes I'd arrive, and they'd have me dress up as a school boy in shirt and tie and act out their role-playing fantasies. Other times they were dominants looking for some slave-master style play. I actually really liked exploring for the first time the kinkier/more alternative side of sex and got really involved with learning the in's and out's of things like bondage and sadomasochism. Half the time it didn't even feel like work.

Those early experiences as an escort and my interests in **BDSM**

have truly been invaluable in carving out my career as a cam boy…

#TIP 2-DEVELOPING A BELIEVABLE WEBCAM PERSONA

Having been camming for a year, I'm fully aware there are many people out there online to whom I don't appeal to in the slightest, but guess what? I'm absolutely fine with that.

The world of online webcamming is so vast, I genuinely mean it when I say there's someone out there for everyone, and I do honestly believe that with the right amount of confidence, anybody has it in them to earn a decent wage. Hairless twinks, fat chicks, silver foxes, gym buffs, couples, transexuals and dominatrixes unite! – there's room for each and every one of you to cam if you're willing to put in the time to build a reliable fanbase and accept early on that you aren't going to be everyone's cup of tea. It can be a tough lesson at first, but you have to learn to be OK with it, brush it off and instead put all your focus into those that do keep coming back for more – not because of what you're not but because of what you are.

When I first started camming, I wasn't being true to myself and for the first few weeks had a bit of a battle on my hands figuring out quite where I fitted in. I tried being the alternative floppy haired emo boy, the laidback surfer dude and the cocky self-assured chav among other stereotypes (sometimes cycling through more than one 'character' in the space of a day), but it just wasn't working. I realised I needed to be honest about who I was, and fully embrace the naturally quirkier side of my personality, warts and all. I will never be perfect. I can't just sit silently like some of the other guys I know do and flex my muscles, getting paid on that alone, but what I do have to my advantage is a strong personality…

When I'm in my element I'm goofy, silly and frankly, rather a nutter. Sometimes I stumble over my words, fall off my chair or make a twat out of myself, and in all honesty? Still to this day I don't even know what I'm doing half the time! But there are people that love that about me, I guess because it's real and relatable. I like to chat with my viewers about all kinds of things, and genuinely enjoy getting to know them as they get to know me. You wouldn't believe the

amount of feedback I get from guys all over the world on how great it is to actually just chat with someone so openly and honestly. Quite often they'll come to me for advice – and don't assume it's all about sex either! A lot of my regulars just enjoy my company and seeing me online.

Now I'm not saying you can't play a character on cam and get away with it, but if you're looking to be doing this full time and putting in long hours then it's hard to keep up that facade, and like it or not, your true personality will show through. As soon as you learn to embrace that though you'll come along leaps and bounds, I promise! Even if your true personality is that of a total bitch, I guarantee there'll be people out there that dig it. Seriously, just roll with it!

THREE – Breaking Free

It was early **February 2015** and I was still living in London with Nick. Things were bleak to say the least. On reflection, I guess the sensible thing to do would have been to just get on a train back home and cut all ties with him and his associates, but I was *far* too caught up in the criminal world I'd come to be a major part of, and felt trapped in the twisted routine of it all.

Plus, don't forget, I was heavily addicted to drugs, not sure how I'd cope without them, and terrified at the prospect of my family (who I'd pretty much shut out by this point, and only kept in minimal contact with) seeing how far I'd fallen. You only had to take one look at me to suss me out – I was the living, breathing personification of a junkie in each and every sense of the word.

That's not to mention the flat I was returning to each day was little more than a dirty unkempt drug den, with a revolving door of addicts stopping by at all hours of the night in all kinds of states to pay for their next fix. Nick had made it very clear to me one night in no uncertain terms that if he went down, *I'd* be going down with him due to my involvement, so we lived in constant fear of police raids and the risk of being arrested. It was an *incredibly* dark time for me.

When I look back at photographs from this era I barely even recognise myself. My eyes look glassy and empty, with black rings beneath them, my cheeks sunken and hollow, my skin grey and covered in pock marks and my hair lank and greasy. I weighed barely 9 stone.

Enough was enough, and I knew I needed to cut the bullshit and get back to some sense of normality. I was dicing with death with the daily cocktail of chemicals I was shooting into my bloodstream; and putting myself in serious potential danger with my escorting out-calls. Most, but not all of the clients were fairly harmless human beings, but it can be a seedy world and I was definitely taken advantage of on more than a few occasions.

A friend of mine named Jordan who I'd met in London during my time spent living with Christos, but hadn't seen since, offered me something of a lifeline after I'd phoned him in distress one evening whilst alone in the flat, and attempted to explain as best as I could in my dysphoric state the full extent of the situation I was in.

"You *need* to get out of there as soon as possible," he said to me.

"I know," I sobbed.

I was crouched down in Nick's bathroom, with my back up against the cold tiled wall; my feet outstretched in front of me.

"I just… I don't know what the fuck to do. I *can't* go back to my

family like this. You don't get it Jordan, I'm a fucking *mess!*"

I felt the tears welling up in my already-bloodshot eyes and soon afterwards streaming down my cheeks. Once they'd started flowing it was difficult to get them to stop. I'd been bottling things up for so long that it finally felt like such a relief to admit to the truth and talk to someone who I felt had my best interests at heart.

"Hey… It's gonna be OK," he reassured me. "Listen, my parents are out of town till next weekend so I've got the house to myself. You can have the spare bedroom if you like and get as much rest as you need until then. There's plenty of food in too. We'll try and get you back on your feet, and then we can think about booking you a ticket home to see your family. How does that sound?"

"Too good to be true," I whimpered. "but… you *don't understand*! I can't just flee; I'm supposed to be holding the fort here. He'll be back any minute now anyway!"

"Isn't he used to you coming and going? With the escorting and everything?"

"Yes of *course!*" I cried, "But I never take more than an overnight bag with me. There's a lot of my shit here and I can't just pack my entire rucksack and take off like that. He'll *know!*"

"I see," – Jordan paused for a moment, clearly thinking things through. "Right, here's what we'll do. Get off the phone to me right now and start packing as much of what you need with you before he gets back. See if you can fit it all in one bag so it doesn't look too suspicious. Maybe leave your rucksack behind if you have to. That's replaceable. Mention to him that you're visiting a client later and say nothing more. Do you have enough money to travel?"

"Mmhm."

"Great, well that's one thing covered then. Just make your way over as soon as you can. I'll be right here waiting."

"Thank you," I said. "Thank you *so* much."

It seemed so simple. *Why hadn't I thought of it myself?* Under any normal circumstances I'd surely have been able to think on my feet enough to come up with a similar plan to get myself out of there.

But I already knew the answer. My own thoughts were by this point far too muddled up and frantic, and Jordan had the mental clarity I lacked. Plus, without him I didn't really know who to turn to. I found it hard putting my trust in people, and most of my social circle now consisted of friends, customers or business partners of Nick's, who I surely couldn't count on not to rat me out. It was a stroke of luck that Jordan had the house to himself. I just had to play it cool and before I knew it I'd be on the home stretch.

I switched my phone to silent, dragged myself up from the bathroom floor, dried my tears and marched straight into the

bedroom, where I immediately started packing all of my clothes (both clean and those in need of a good wash) in a scattered frenzy – compressing them as tightly as I could in to my overnight bag, and somehow also managing to squeeze my laptop and phone charger in amongst it all.

Just as I was finishing, I heard the all too familiar sound of the key turning in the front door of the flat. My heart sunk. The inevitable had happened. Nick was home.

"Hey," I said, trying my best to sound as confident as I could muster. "What's up?"

"Just done a drop off in Bounds Green," he said. "You wouldn't mind popping to Muswell Hill would you to deliver some more gear for me? I'm knackered!"

"Um," – naturally I was hesitant. "When exactly?"

"I'm waiting on a call off the guy to confirm the order so anytime in the next few hours," he replied.

"Sure," I said. "But I've actually got a client to see tonight, at 9."

"When did you arrange that? That's the first *I've* heard of it," he said, resentment rising in his voice.

"While you were gone," I replied, timidly.

"And what if I need you *here*? To sell for me?"

"I should only be gone a couple of hours at most," I explained. "He doesn't live that far from here. I've met with him before. He pays well."

"I see," he said, looking me up and down begrudgingly.

I could tell that he wasn't happy, and could read the frustration in his face. But I could also see that he himself was visibly strung out and exhausted, so I was fairly confident things weren't going to erupt into an argument.

"Whatever," he said eventually, and plonked himself on his side of the bed where he sat rolling a joint and puffing away on it slowly.

"What about the drop off you wanted me to do… in Muswell Hill?" I asked reluctantly, when the weed had began to take effect on him.

"Fuck it," he slurred. "If they want the shit that badly they can travel to me here."

It was music to my ears, *I'd been let off the hook!*

"Go about your business," he said. "Just make sure you put in a good word for me."

"You know I always do," I replied, forcing a smile.

I checked the time. It was approaching nine o'clock and there was somewhere I *desperately* needed to be. I grabbed my bag discreetly (not that it would've made much difference if I hadn't, he was *far* too out of it to notice), and made my exit.

"Bye Nick," I said, as he drifted off into a stoned slumber.

"Yeah… see ya later."

I shut the front door behind me and breathed a deep sigh of relief.

That was the last time we ever spent in each others company. The last time we ever spoke face to face. I later learned that the following day his flat had been broken in to by a gang of armed robbers, who'd threatened him at gunpoint in to unlocking and handing over the contents of his safe. If only I'd have stayed a day longer, what might've happened to *me* in that situation? I dread to think…

But it seemed like things were looking up, and though there were still battles ahead, I felt like finally I was moving out of the darkness, and into the light.

Jordan had the most magnificent home – it was tucked away on a quiet suburban street in Highgate and you could quite easily walk past it and think nothing of it, or even fail to notice it existed if you hadn't been there before and were unfamiliar – but once you'd made your way through the rustic front gate and trotted up the cobble stoned driveway, gazing up at it from the ground level it truly resembled a mini palace….

If you'd been given a grand tour of the place you'd have seen for yourself the warm and inviting cottage-like exterior, a homely 'old-fashioned but with a contemporary-twist style' kitchen, a chic grand bathroom with dark marble covered walls complete with it's own hot tub which lay surrounded by full length mirrors, plus, what must have been a near half-acre garden of land. He was still living with his parents of course (who were both well paid workers in the medical field, so naturally had enough money to pay for the place itself), but in the days I spent there before saying goodbye to London for good, it was just the two of us.

In the early days when Christos and I were dating, we'd frequently invite Jordan out alongside us to go for drinks in Soho. I could never keep up with either of them and I'd often end up far more smashed than was socially acceptable, and have to be bundled in to a taxi – with the two of them giving the driver directions on how to get me back to the flat. I'd stagger home and be found the next morning having fallen to sleep in the most unusual of places, with little recollection of the previous night, and a head that felt like it'd been hit with a sledgehammer. It's fair to say that Jordan had seen me in some pretty fucked up states, but *never* this bad…

Even *he* couldn't hide the wave of pure shock that washed over

him as he opened the front door to greet me.

"Jesus!" he exclaimed. "You certainly look like you've been through the wars!"

"I feel a bit like I have," I said. "Look, I don't mean to be rude but… can we just get inside?"

He didn't answer but nodded sympathetically and gestured for me to follow him indoors. When I took off my coat and he saw for the first time the bruises and track marks that lined both my right and left arms, his face was aghast.

I took a quick shower and changed into some fresh clothes, and then we sat in the kitchen drinking Earl Grey tea – a luxury as far as I was concerned, and reminiscing on days gone by. Jordan was trying his best to keep the atmosphere as light-hearted and calm as possible, but even in the comfort of his swish family home I still found myself riddled with anxiety.

As exhausted as I was, trying to sleep that night seemed next to impossible when my thoughts were so clouded with fear and doubt, insecurity and shame. I'd drift off for an hour or so, only to wake up in a cold sweat from the most vivid of nightmarish dreams – usually ones where Nick had somehow found out where I was hiding out and come kicking down the bedroom door, baying for my blood.

Though I knew all drugs came with a 'high' followed by a 'crash', I hadn't fully anticipated, or prepared myself for the comedown that was to follow what had essentially been a month long binge.

I'd gone from taking copious amounts of drugs to going cold turkey, and my body was struggling to deal with the shock of such a sudden detox. I sat up in bed, shaking and sobbing quietly to myself.

Jordan had done more than enough for me already and I didn't wish to wake him or trouble him any further, but he'd obviously heard my weeping. There came a quiet tapping at the door…

"Joey," he said. "Can I come in?"

"Sure."

He gave me a friendly cuddle and then perched himself on the side of the bed.

"What *are* we gonna do with you?" he said, in his typical cheeky manner of speaking.

"I don't know," I sniffled. "I want you to know that I appreciate all you're doing to help me. We both know you don't have to. It's just… there's so much going on in my head right now. I'm struggling to cope, Jord!"

There was silence for a moment

"Plus, now your bed sheets are all covered in sweat and I feel guilty."

He laughed, and reached out his hand to me.

“Honestly Joey, I couldn’t care less. If *anything* that’s a good sign, it means the drugs are leaving your system.”

“I suppose,” I said.

“What if I were to give you some valium?” he asked. “Just to tide you over the next few days and help you ride out the comedown?”

I turned the idea over in my head for a moment.

“That would be perfect,” I said. ”But it wouldn’t be fair on you. Keep them for yourself. Please.”

“Honestly Joey, I have *plenty*. I used to have a doctors prescription but they’ll only dole out so much, so now I order them in bulk off the internet. They’re great for helping you sleep and coping with anxiety.”

“OK,” I said. “Thanks Jord.”

“Hey, that’s what friends are for,” he said. “Just gimme a sec and I’ll go fetch you some.”

He left the spare bedroom and returned a few minutes later with a strip of blister-pack pills. 10 altogether. He handed them to me.

“These are 10mg each,” he said. “The strongest you can get. You might wanna split them in half at first and see how you get on. Go easy on them.”

“I will,” I replied. “Do you want some money for these?”

“I don’t want *anything* other than for you to get yourself in a better place than you are in now. Take a half and get some rest. First thing tomorrow we’ll look into booking you a ticket back. How’s Thursday sound?”

Two days away.

“Thursday’s fine.”

“Right, I’m heading back to bed then. Are you gonna be alright on your own here?”

I nodded in acknowledgment.

“If there’s anything else I can do for you, don’t hesitate to knock on my door.”

“I won’t.”

After Jordan had left, I broke open the seal to release one of the small blue tablets and split it in half. Within minutes of taking it I felt a great deal calmer, and within half an hour I’d drifted off into a deep, hypnotic state of sleep.

Once we’d booked my ticket, I slept for most of the remaining days at Jordan’s house, occasionally getting up only to go to the bathroom. He’d encourage me to drink bottled water and eat high calorie protein bars, and would sometimes bring me up breakfast in bed (which was so unbelievably sweet of him!), but we didn’t see a great deal of each other otherwise.

I felt, and still do some extent, guilty that he’d invited me over

and I wasn't able to offer him much in the way of companionship – but I recognise he did it out of the kindness of his heart. He knew I needed the rest and recuperation more than anything else at that point, so as long as I was comfortable he was happy to leave me be and get on with what he needed to.

By Wednesday my anxiety and feelings of hopelessness, while still present, had lifted considerably, and I felt able to start making small plans towards the future. When I got back home I wanted to reconnect with some of my old friends, spend more time with my family, and then put some serious thought into what I was going to do long term, career wise. The fact I even had the capacity to be considering these things and not breaking out into a panic attack was a massive milestone really. A week prior I'd come to accept that I was probably going to die of an overdose any day soon, or end up serving time in prison. I genuinely believed that to be my fate.

A lot of addicts don't get a second chance. To quote from the '**Narcotics Anonymous**' handbook – '*Very simply, an addict is a man or woman whose life is controlled by drugs. We are people in the grip of a continuing and progressive illness whose ends are always the same: jails, institutions, and death*'.

I don't agree with all that the 12-step program stands for, and I admit that I've never really given it the fullest of my commitment, Although I have attended my fair share of meetings when I felt I needed the support of others, if only to hear them share their stories – and that one line in particular always resonated and struck a chord with me.

I wonder if it seems contradictory of me to make mention of that, after having just admitted to Jordan giving me valium, knowing my struggles (medication or not, it *is* still a drug at the end of the day); but those little blue pills were truly a lifesaver in quelling my paranoia and putting my fears at ease, as well as dealing with my insomnia, and facing up to the final challenge ahead of me – the coach trip home.

I said my thankyou's and goodbye's to Jordan Thursday morning and made the hour long trip via the London Underground to Victoria, where I was to catch my coach home to Mommouthshire. I popped another half a valium tablet beforehand to ward off the stress of travelling, but the coach journey itself was painless and totally smooth sailing. I can't tell you how genuinely happy I was to see my mum waiting for me at the other side when it was my turn to get off. She had little idea of the immense struggles I'd been through since seeing her last, but that was how I wanted it to stay.

"Long time no see," I said, as she reached out to hug me.

"We thought at one point you weren't *ever* gonna come home!"

I couldn't quite tell if she was joking or not. Mum was often hard

to read like that. But there many times that I myself doubted if I'd ever make it back in one piece. Still, I brushed the comment off. I *had* to be strong, or at least appear to be.

"Don't be silly," I said.

"Did you have a good time?" she asked.

"Ups and downs," I replied.

Perhaps the greatest understatement of the century…

"But yeah, I'm alright."

It was such a relief for me to be back home, and back in the comfort of my own bed. But I knew that the novelty would soon wear off. So I kicked back and chilled for the first couple of days in a bit of a valium daze, before sitting down in front of my computer late one evening and, for the first time, seriously considering my options. I found myself up against a bit of a brick wall. I had no desire to return to London anytime soon, and deal with the emotional baggage that came along with that, and yet I still needed to be bringing in some source of income.

Drug dealing was not something that I *ever* wished to get involved in again, and escorting wasn't really an option as I still hadn't learned to drive, not to mention the area we lived in was so rural I'd be hard-pressed to find a single gay client.

I wondered, albeit briefly, if maybe if it was time I stopped being such a rebel to society and tried to get myself a simpler job in retail, or maybe hospitality.

Then I thought back to my '**PalTalk**' days as a pre-teen, and the pop up ads I'd seen while browsing porn online. Camming was a growing industry, and surely something I could try my hand at. From a few brief Google searches, I already felt armed with a wealth of potentially golden information – I just had to figure out how to navigate my way through it, and where best to begin…

#TIP 3-FINDING THE BEST WEB SITES TO CAM FOR

Being a cam boy, or a cam girl is not an easy job, but if you find your niche it's definitely one of the most rewarding, and something you can certainly make a great deal of money out of. In many ways it isn't all that different to Sales work, or a commission based job – only the 'product' your selling is yourself. On days where you earn big it's the biggest boost of confidence. You feel appreciated, valued, sexy and loved! Sometimes signing off after a big money spinner session is like stepping off an arena stage after a great performance –

you feel like a superstar and you're riding on a high!

On slow days where you're earning little or nothing at all, it can be a really tough knock to your confidence. You start to question your looks, your personality and what it is that you're doing wrong.

While there are ways you can maximise your setup and potential for the best chance of standing out amongst the crowd (which I'll get into a little bit later), even the most accomplished of cammers have their off days, so don't be too hard on yourself.

There are such a vast number of different web sites out there where you can set up a profile to cam and start earning cash from the get-go. They all have their own pro's and con's, and depending on your personality, you'll likely find yourself drawn to one or two above all others.

Tipping based sites, like **CAM4** and **Chaturbate** are essentially where you have your own chat room, and anyone (paying or non-paying) can drop by to watch and interact with you. The way you generally make money on these sites is by gaining tokens, which you can later redeem for cash.

How you go about gaining tokens is entirely up for you. On **Chaturbate** a lot of the performers choose to do 'countdowns' – where they'll put on a pre-determined show of some kind, (usually a cum show) for their viewers once they reach the end of it…

Cam4 is similar in that you can set a 'Goal' for yourself – but it's not a necessity. Generally when I'm performing on **Cam4** I'll charge **25 to 50 tokens** – depending on how many viewers are online, per request.

There's also the option of 'Going Private' on **Cam4**, where a user with tokens can essentially 'have you to themselves' for a minute based token rate. I generally don't do too many private's these days, as I prefer the interaction of an audience on a larger scale, but they're great for boosting your earnings, and if at any time you feel uncomfortable, or can't deliver whatever the tipper is asking you to do, you can choose to shut down the session and return to the main chat room.

Tipping based sites aren't for everyone and there are other alternatives. **Streamate**, for example, is a site where you earn the majority of your money from people taking you to Exclusive/Private chat (you can set your own rates as to how much you want to charge per minute), and another camming site, **LiveJasmin**, works in a similar manner.

The problem I personally find with these sites is that quite often I find myself sitting around waiting for someone to take me to private – and whilst sometimes you can log on and be in the midst of a 30 minute private show within seconds, other times an hour can go by where not a single user will choose to engage with you. I find it quite cold and soul-destroying myself, but for some people they get a great flow of customers and probably wouldn't ever even consider camming anywhere else.

Thirdly, there's what's known as '**independent**', or '**indie**' camming – essentially putting on shows for clients over video chat programs like **Skype**. Though you wont get the money right away, it's best to agree with your client beforehand to do this for a pre-determined rate, paid in tokens via your chosen camming platform (for me, **CAM4**) – **Paypal** is a bit of a grey area when it comes to exchanging money for what's considered 'adult services' – so whilst you might get away with it once or twice, there's no guarantee you won't run into problems if you frequently accept payment this way.

I've ran into issues with clients who have paid this way before. They filed a dispute against me, despite going through with the show as agreed, and essentially left me with no other option but to refund them – or risk losing my account by admitting I'd been using it to put on adult shows.

Other cammers choose to accept payment in the form of **Amazon Gift Cards** or clients buying them an item of relevant cost from their **Wish List**. These are generally safer options.

FOUR – The birth of JMatt93

After doing my research I'd decided to try out camming for cash for myself. I thought to myself '*why not? I have nothing to lose by giving it a go*!'

I didn't put too much thought in to coming up with a stage name so opted for signing up under the username **Jmatt93** – with the J representing my first name Joseph (which I wasn't willing to divulge, at least initially), and Matt the Matthew in my middle name; 93 because that was of course the year I was born. Pretty simple and straightforward I know, but I didn't want anything too flash, cocky or self assured. *SEXIBRITLAD1* and *HOTHORNYYOUNGSLUTBOY*, for example, were completely out of the question!

I waited till my parents had gone to bed one Sunday evening and decided this was the night I was going to make my **Cam4** debut! I remember at the time I was using a white Toshiba laptop (which was pretty worn out, having owned it for several years and not really maintained it very well), and broadcasted from the in-built webcam, in the spacious downstairs living room of my family home.

I'd been watching in the days prior some of the more established performers as a bit of market research, and saw that generally they were earning tokens by offering things like '**25 tokens for dick/ass flash**' or '**naked at 100 tokens**'.

But I *wasn't* an established performer – I was a nobody by comparison, and it soon became apparent (after about an hour of sitting around fidgeting, and manoeuvring myself into all sorts of positions to try and look as confident, alluring and sexy as I could), that people just weren't willing to pay those prices for amateur like myself.

At a loss as to what to set my rates to, I adjusted my tagline to a more general '**Please tip for requests**' – figuring *anything* was better than nothing by this point. But the traffic in my room was so slow, averaging about 7 viewers at a time, and those that *did* interact with me were generally token-less freeloaders, who all seemed to want something for nothing.

Still, like the determined little shit I was, still am, and will probably always be, I stuck it out.

My total earnings for that first night of camming on **February 22nd 2015** were? Drum roll please…

$1.50!

The following evening was marginally better as I somehow managed to rake in a further **$2.50**, but I if I was truly going to make this work as a source of income, I knew I had to up my game

massively.

I figured consistency was key. Even if I was earning fuck all to begin with, I still wanted to be online as much as possible, so that my face was out there for anyone and everyone browsing the site to see. I experimented with camming at different times of the day and night, and made sure to pay attention to the 'amount of viewers online' – as listed on the left hand side of the **Cam4** homepage, so I could figure out when I had the best chance of drawing more traffic into my room.

Within a week or two I was averaging a solid **$15** a night and started to notice the same users would frequent my room. I always tried my best to be talkative and interact with all of my viewers, regardless of whether they tipped or not. A lot of the guys, I figured, were lonely, and enjoyed the fact that I was willing to communicate with them. And on reflection I suppose *I* was lonely too. Maybe that's why I tried *so* hard to make camming work for me – because more than I needed the money, I needed the company. That was perhaps the true driving force behind it all.

A few weeks into camming, I got a message from a guy who'd been stopping by my room every other day or so, asking if I'd be willing to put on a private **Skype** show for him, one-on-one.

'Have you got any toys? I wanna see some ass play!' the message read.

Oh dear.

This was part of the problem. Believe it or not, I'd *never* in my life owned a dildo, a vibrator, nor any other kind of sex-based toy. The best I'd been able to offer to my clientele up until now had been me jerking off my cock, rubbing myself in baby oil or flashing my arse, but *clearly* that wasn't going to be enough in the long run, and now they were craving something more.

'No toys sorry. But I've got a nice sized cucumber I could use,' I replied, my cheeks flushing crimson red, even as I typed out the words.

I waited nervously for his response.

'That'll do perfectly,' he said. 'So Skype yeah? How much for a 30 minute show?'

I really had no idea what to reply. I didn't want to throw out a figure that he'd refuse, but I felt embarrassed asking for anything more than £20. To some degree, even *that* seemed expensive. But I reasoned that 30 minutes was a fairly long time to be screwing my ass with a cucumber, and I'd surely be pretty worn out by the end of it, so I wasn't prepared to do it for any less.

'£20 is fine,' he said. 'Paypal?'

I shut down **Cam4** and logged into my **Skype** account. After giving him my **PayPal** address, he transferred the money, and I

scurried away to the kitchen fridge to grab a cucumber that looked a decent size.

That in itself was a problem.

There were only two available – one already slightly cut in to and so *pathetically* small I could probably have fit the damn thing up one of my nostrils – and as for the other? Well let's just say it was rather beastly, both in length and girth, and I really, really, *really* didn't wanna put it in me…

Too late though. The session had been paid for and as a man of my word; I had to keep up my end of the bargain. I wiped it down and then wrapped a condom around it for sanitary reasons, before returning to the living room – armed and ready to put on my first independent show.

Firstly, I balanced my laptop on a slightly rickety coffee table a metre or so away. I then got on my knees in the doggy-style position on the leather sofa, with my pre-lubed arse up in the air facing the computer. I waved the cucumber up so he could see it, and then covered it in as much baby oil (the only form of lubricant available) as I could. Having not been fucked in a fair few weeks, and without so much as a bottle of poppers to hand, I knew this was going to be potentially incredibly painful, but I put on a brave face, thought about the money and started to ease the condom-covered cucumber inside of me.

For the first 5 minutes or so I teased the client with just insertion of the very tip of the cucumber, which was painful enough in itself, but pausing for a moment to get close enough to the screen to read his messages, it was clear he wasn't satisfied.

'DEEPER!' he'd typed.

'Can't you fit it all in?'

'COME ON!'

I felt like a rabbit in the headlights. We were only 6 minutes in to a 30 minute session and already I was feeling the heat, and the pressure to perform.

"This ain't no little cucumber here," I said to him aloud with a nervous giggle. "It hurts ya know!"

'Move cam closer,' he responded. 'Closer so I can see!'

I moved the table a few inches nearer and angled the screen so the webcam was focused more prominently on my arse. I then took a deep breath, tried to relax my sphincter muscles as best as I could without the aid of poppers, and pushed the object deeper and deeper inside myself.

"Argh!" I grunted. "Ah fuck."

I turned my head to see what he'd typed out in response.

'Better,' he wrote. 'Now fuck harder! Fuck that tight little ass!'

I did as he'd requested and tried to look like I was enjoying it, yet truly I just wanted it all to be over. My arse really wasn't ready that particular evening to take *such* a hard pounding. I grabbed the bottle of baby oil from the side and smeared another handful of it around the rim of my hole, then covered the cucumber in another layer too – ready for further insertion.

I counted down in my head.

3, 2, 1

And in it slid. My arse was loosening up by this point, but the jagged end of the cucumber was pressing up against my insides in the way a regular penis wouldn't, and the pain was intense.

Ironically, I have a tattoo on my inner right bicep that reads '**Pain is Inevitable, Suffering is Optional**' – a quote with origins in Buddhism that I took an instant liking to. But it was hard in that moment not to think of myself as a victim, despite my agreement to carry out the show.

'MOAN,' the client wrote. 'Moan louder!'

I was already screeching in pain, but it was close to 2am, and my family were upstairs sleeping. I turned up the volume on my microphone, so that my squeals could be heard more clearly without me having to scream the house down, and carried on till I was dripping in sweat, and physically couldn't take a single second more.

We were 26 minutes in. That was as close to the 30 we'd agreed upon as far as I was concerned. I lit up a cigarette and chatted with the client for a further 4 minutes.

It turned out he'd enjoyed it (despite being so demanding about it all), and as I recall he became my first real **Skype** 'regular' – requesting similar shows each week.

As I shut off the cam and analysed the condom covered cucumber, I noticed for the first time that it was covered in blood. *No wonder the session had been so painful!* I'd pushed myself *way* too far and my body was now *crying* out in pain. **£20** seemed like a pathetic sum of money when I actually sat down afterwards and thought about the intensity of the session, and what I'd just put myself through in the pursuit of it.

I felt like I'd cheapened myself, and there was little I could do but just pray that my arse would heal quick enough so that I could perform again soon, and hope that I hadn't done any major damage to it.

Following my disastrous incident with the cucumber, I knew I needed to get at least one vibrator or anal toy to keep up with the competition. Next stop? Straight to **Google**, in search of just that…

#TIP 4 – A SHORT GUIDE TO BUYING SEX TOYS AND OTHER CAM ESSENTIALS

For the most part, like my clothing, I buy my sex toys online. The first vibrator I ever owned was from **Bondara.co.uk** – in the picture and the description it was advertised as **'Big Red'** and I chose it because it was on Sale. When it arrived I was disappointed to find that **'Big Red'** didn't quite live up to its name. It was more 'hot pink', and not really all that big or impressive looking. Other than that one particular vibrator though, I have to say that everything else I've bought from **Bondara** has been top notch, and always for a good price. They frequently have discount offers available, and if you order enough in one go you get free delivery along with it – so I usually try and stock up when I have the money to.

In total I now own both ankle and wrist restraints, a variety of cock rings, a leather gimp mask, nipple clamps, a flogger, two dildos, a blackout blindfold, a penis pump (which I almost didn't buy, but happens to be one of my favourite toys to play with) and a ball gag. I also like to keep a clear plastic funnel to hand, which I brought from a general hardware store – it's got multiple purposes in my shows but generally makes its appearance when the water sports (piss-play) fanatics are around.

As far as camming essentials go, these are mine…

Baby Oil – I go through bottles and bottles of it!

Baby wipes, tissues and towels – Camming can get messy!

Poppers – (I find it much more cost effective to buy these in bulk, rather than from saunas or sex shops – I use a site called '**Room Aromas**') – my favourite brand are called **'Alpha'**

Viagra – I don't use it every time I perform, but for any male performer, it's definitely something you should always have to hand. There's nothing worse than trying to carry out that cum show you promised upon hitting your goal with a flaccid, worn out dick -trust me, I've been there!

FIVE – Rollercoaster

My year as a cam boy has been something of a rollercoaster from the get go with it's many ups and downs. It really did take me a long time to find my feet and make a mark on the camming world, and in many ways I still have a long way to go.

It didn't take too long before my parents latched on to what I was doing. Finding baby oil stains on the leather sofa was Clue #1 I think, followed by me leaving a pair of shiny black latex briefs covered in cum on the floor one night accidentally. They neither encouraged nor discouraged it when the secret was finally out, but I think were somewhat pleased in the sense that I had at least *something* to focus on, wasn't having to borrow money from them, or sign on at the dole office and was home most of the time. My mum, who I've always shared the biggest bond with, felt as if she'd lost me when I first left for London, and then again once more when I'd returned. I think it was a big relief for her to know where I was, even *if* what I was doing wasn't necessarily something she'd have chosen for me to pursue herself.

Up until around **April** I'd been alternating between putting on my shows in the downstairs living room and my upstairs bedroom. But it limited me in terms of making conversation (having to keep my dirty talk to a minimum and control the volume of my moans and groans), and space wise, my bedroom was *far* too cramped. I couldn't even stand up on cam in it and keep my whole body in frame at the same time, so I pretty much just had to sit hunched over my laptop or lay back on the bed at all times. It was irritating to say the least.

There was an outhouse on my parents' land which my dad had built a few years prior, but which pretty much had no use anymore other than for storage. I'd originally asked if I could have it as my bedroom, to which my parents declined, fearing it'd be far too cold in the winter months. But after some gentle persuasion, they allowed me to use it as an '**Office Space**'. We came to the agreement that I could do in there whatever work entailed, but in the same way that 'what happens in Vegas stays in Vegas' – whatever happened in my office space/cam room I wasn't to discuss outside of it.

My parents helped tremendously with re-renovating the outhouse for me – with a desk by the window and study chair to match, a chest of drawers for me to put my supplies in, and a compact leather sofa/pull-up-bed, which I would drape over in animal print throwovers, or sometimes scarlet red to match the painted feature wall (on which I later attached a massive whiteboard)

The rest of the decorations I either picked out myself in charity

shops or home department stores, or were things I already owned and just transferred over. I tended to cam mostly in the evenings on **Cam4**, but had occasional pre-paid bookings to carry out throughout the day, so the fact I could utilise the space anytime I wanted was ideal. There was also a very small 'en suite' bathroom I was able to make use of. In saying that, there was no bath in it nor shower, only a toilet and mirrored cabinet, but it at least meant I didn't have to race through the house every time I needed a piss. It allowed me some privacy away from the rest of the house and family and meant I had a lot more freedom than I'd had before.

I started keeping a diary from **June** (4 months in to my job as a cam boy) and thought I'd share with you in the remainder of this chapter some of the more poignant and detailed extracts, so you can get a feel for what an average day or week's work was like for me, what was going on in my head at the time and how much effort I was (or wasn't) putting into my shows…

June 27th 2015

I feel so unbelievably tired today. Utterly drained. I'm averaging four or five hours sleep a night at the moment and it simply isn't enough…

Or is it? I've always thought I was one of those people who naturally just needed a lot of sleep in order to function properly but perhaps I'm just lazy. Saying that, I worked my arse off on Cam4 yesterday!

I put on a damn good show – I know I did! But it was such a slow night in terms of the trickle of people in and out of my room and I didn't finish up till gone 4.30am. I started before 11pm so that gives you a good indication of how long I was on cam for. People kept leaving to go about their business and then would log back on hours later to find me still online, much to their surprise and amusement.

Without being too much of a beggar, I made it very clear I wasn't leaving till I hit my goal. I set myself a target of 500 tokens (offering generally 25tk per request, the odd 10tk flash here and there and the promise of a cum show at the end) – and come hell or high water I was bloody well gonna hit that damn target! I did… eventually, in fact overshooting it (no pun intended!) by another 50 tokens.

Just to clarify, **500 tokens** amounts to **$50** in earnings, so this particular night, despite all my best efforts, I would've only earned **$55** (approximately **£38**)

June 27th 2015 (continued)

My shifts aren't always this tiresome. I've made more tokens in far less time and for far less effort before, and of course I earn much better money in my 1 on 1 Skype shows which are generally more focused and intense. But I'm an exhibitionist and I think probably always have been this way, so naturally I prefer an audience, and the bigger the better.

I don't expect to ever get rich off Cam4 alone, but I've built up such a connection over the last few months with some of my regular viewers that I no longer consider them just men with money waiting to be spent on me. I truly consider them my friends. They don't always even have the tokens to tip me, but I know if I'm having a shitty day online or things aren't going so well they'll be there to keep the conversation flowing or to support me in my hour of need, and that's something I feel blessed to be able to have.

These are the things people don't understand about camming. I tell people I'm a cam boy and they automatically think I'm some kind of low-rent porn star. Then there's the belief that if you're attractive and willing to show some flesh, you can just sit in front of your webcam and horny strangers from all over the world will happily just throw money at you. Sometimes admittedly that is the case, but for the most part, in reality it simply doesn't work like that…

I try my best to present myself as best as I can in preparation for my solo shows, but in many ways I still feel like an amateur and am very much still learning on the job.

There have been plenty of times I've tripped up over wires or spilled drinks. On a few occasions I've even knocked my webcam over or X'd off my broadcast feed by accident. I know it has an awful lot to do with the fact that I'm clumsy and a bit too heavy on my feet, but I think that no matter how well you prepare yourself in

advance for putting on a show, mistakes do happen and things like this are inevitable. I try to just laugh it off, and own it.

None of us are perfect, however much we might strive to be, but I think that, for viewers especially, that's actually one of the biggest attractions of camming. There's a rawness and a realness to it that you don't get with porn alone. Things don't always go to plan, but it's authentic and it's genuine, and that's what keeps people coming back for more.

My next journal entry came several days later…

July 1st 2015

I've been doing this job for a while now but it's still weird to consider this my reality, my normality. I worry already that I've become somewhat of a caricature – a fairly attractive (though by no means perfect) young, willing cam slut with a taste for sleaze and kink.

Whilst all of that does ring true, there's so much more to me than that, and I feel, and fear, that the bigger J Matt grows, the smaller Joseph becomes. It's a catch 22 situation. I don't want to lose who it is I am at heart, but equally, I crave the reassurance and validation that camming gives me, because growing up it was something I never had.

Nobody at school ever stopped to tell me I was hot, or handsome. All I remember were jibes, taunts and sniggers in the hallways. I think a lot of my ex classmates would probably be shocked by what it is I do now, and how openly I've been willing to flaunt my sexuality. Several of them probably envisaged me growing up to be the 40 year old virgin. My rebellion started later than most, and I guess in some ways I still haven't entirely grown out of it. I question sometimes if indeed I ever will…

I did a private cam show via Skype earlier today that, despite my preparation, didn't go entirely to plan. I wasn't able to follow through with what we'd agreed upon beforehand, and even though he thanked me and made out it was no big deal, in truth I felt like a failure. I felt like I'd let him down for not delivering all the

goods and it made me feel… well, a bit pathetic.

I still got paid for it and he hasn't explicitly stated that he was unhappy with how it all went, but following that show, all my self-doubts, insecurities and feelings of unworthiness came creeping back in, and suddenly I felt like such an amateur, a fraud. I wish I could just brush it aside and move on, but it's never been that easy for me. I put my all into that show, wanked myself hard for a good 45 minutes, working the room in a variety of positions till I was dripping and drenched in sweat, and STILL I felt inferior – all because there was no big climactic moment. I'm supposed to be running the ship, the one in control. How utterly unprofessional I must have seemed!

I scroll down my Twitter and Tumblr news feed and frequently lust after the men I see. But at the same time I'm constantly measuring myself up to them, comparing myself, and I always, at least in my own mind, come up short.

I lay down on tanning beds in an attempt to get the perfect tan that mother nature never blessed me with, I plan tattoos and piercings in a bid to make my skin seem more interesting, I jog daily and lift weights, and I try and keep my diet in check. I strive for that perfect male physique but I fear I'll never reach it. And lets say I did… would I even be happy?

I feel like I'm treading water. Scraping by but with no real sense of direction. I hope I can find the right one soon, wherever that may be…

Obviously I was feeling very insecure at the time of writing the above entry, and still to this day I doubt myself and over think things. I *do* think it's good to be self critical to a degree but when you're *too* hard on yourself and not feeling secure in your own skin it does have a tendency to come across on cam.

July 3rd 2015

It's 9am on Friday the 3rd of July. Fuck! How did we get this far into the year? My mum has this thing about saying 'White Rabbits' at the start of each month which I've never quite understood. Does anyone else 'celebrate' so to speak with that phrase? Where does it originate

from? Either way I've got the image of a White Rabbit permanently tattooed on my left calf (inspired by one of my favourite Disney movies – Alice in Wonderland, of course!) so I must admit I haven't felt the need…

Feeling slightly hung over today. Made a deal to take a shot of some 45% Turkish alcohol I found laying around the house each time someone tipped me on cam, and lets just say I got PLASTERED. I didn't hang about too long in my chat room (which is probably a good thing as I'd have been legless much earlier on into the night if the tips came rolling in too fast!). So with the promise of money, like a carrot being dangled in front of a donkey's face, I switched back over to my old trusted friend Skype to continue with another impromptu one on one…

My last private show didn't go so well, so I was more than a little bit nervous about going ahead with another, but it all worked out fine in the end, even if things did get a little messier than intended (I'm saying no more!). Some clients are easier to deal with than others, but this one was generally quite relaxed about the whole thing. I don't like feeling like I'm being paid to sit around and do nothing but make small talk but he didn't seem to mind my regular cigarette intervals too much, and we still got on with things as intended. In other words, I feel like I delivered on all counts and both of us I think it's fair to say were pleased by the end of it. Even if I was completely smashed. Ha, never mind! Job well done I think…

If I have anything to add to the entry above in hindsight, it's to be very careful with drinking alcohol whilst on cam. I still get nervous every time I hit the 'Broadcast' button, believe it or not, so I'll often have a beer or two during my shows to ease some of my performance anxiety, and loosen up a bit. I have though, on a number of occasions, gone way overboard and got extremely intoxicated, egged on by my viewers. Like most people, when I drink my inhibitions are lowered, and so I've quite often ended up doing things I would never normally do, or at least not without being tipped. People want a free show, or to spend as little as they can on you – and if you're drunk, or high, it's *so* much easier to get carried away and perform for next to nothing. Don't fall into that trap; you'll only end up regretting it afterwards!

Sold a few things on Ebay that I need to sort out then post, later today, reluctant as I am to venture into town. I haven't been paid in advance but I'm pretty sure I pre-maturely promised a couple of guys I'd do shows for them at some point via Skype today. I'm not desperate for the money; last night was a nice little earner, but I am a man of my word. We'll see how that one goes because camming at all is pretty much the last thing on my mind right now, but whatever. I'm hoping I'll be feeling a bit more energised and up for it later, otherwise I'll have to be the dick that reschedules.

I don't like letting people down but equally I don't think it's fair to broadcast if my heart's not in it. When I first started out camming, I'd force myself to do shows (generally on Cam4) however knackered or miserable I was, because I thought the more time I put into it the more I'd get out of it…

I try to treat this as a proper job, and sometimes I feel guilty about taking a few days off, but it's usually always worth it if I can come back re-energised, focused and ready to hustle again!

I was *really* getting close to burn-out by this point with the long nights and affected sleeping pattern that came along with it. I wasn't taking great care of myself – for example, I wouldn't eat 3 hours before I knew I was due to cam for fear of looking bloated, then would binge on excessive amounts of carbs as soon as I'd signed off. I also found myself turning down invites to go out with friends in favour of staying home, trapped in the confines of my cam room, which at times was a palace and others a prison.

Sometimes I'd even opt to sleep in there, and there were a number of occasions I didn't leave the house for a week – other than taking the 5 minute walk to the local Londis shop to buy cigarettes and energy drinks, just to keep me going!

When you're your own boss and work your own hours the flexibility is a brilliant thing, but it made it very difficult for me to switch off from 'cam mode' and stop thinking about work. Even the majority of my down time was spent creating graphics to advertise my upcoming shows and promote my social media, or filming and editing short videos which I'd sell online or offer as an incentive to my highest tipper. I was a busy boy! *I lived and breathed the cam boy lifestyle…*

July 9th 2015

I've been much more focused lately in doing community driven tip-based shows via Cam4 and that's been working out quite well! The goal I'm aiming for is $500 a month.

I know I'm not the first (and wont be the last]) to come up with game ideas to keep the room feeling fresh and exciting but I don't see as much of it on Cam4 as say, Chaturbate or MFC and I really wanna be a part of bringing some of that fun back the community!

The dice game was a particular favourite last weekend and I can't wait to play that again this Friday! The way it works is there's a set of actions corresponding to a number on a dice. 20 tokens per roll and you can get anything from a cock flash to a full blown ass pounding ala my trusty black dildo. Roll a 6 and my fate is entirely in your hands – I've got quite a collection of toys and outfits available to me now so there's plenty of options to choose from if you are a bit of a sadist and enjoy seeing me suffer. Equally, a 50 token tip guarantees you an automatic 6, so if you're not much of a gambling man and feel like having your way with me, for an extra 30 tokens you're more than welcome to.

Did I mention I also have 2 dices now? Still trying to figure out the logistics of how this one's gonna work, but I'll definitely throw in a bit of foot play for those who come into my cam room looking to get off on that. I was thinking of offering free 1-on-1 Skype calls to anyone who rolls, lets say an 8, but I'm still not decided yet…

I haven't devoted myself to as many paid Skype shows this week which has been quite a refreshing break. I've made the odd £20 here and there when Cam4 viewership has been weak, but I've not felt in the mood for anything too extreme so that's kind of on hold for the moment…

#TIP 5-BEST WEBCAMS TO BUY, ROOM AND LIGHTING SETUP, GAMES

If you're serious about being a cam boy or cam girl for the foreseeable future then there are things that you're going to need to invest in to ensure you look the best you can on cam.

When it comes to **Webcams**, for the first couple of months I relied purely on my in-built laptop webcam alone, but to compete with the competition I knew I had to step it up a mark and invest in something more upmarket.

With an in-built webcam you're rather limited in movement, but with an external one you're not held back by that restriction. **POV** (Point of View) shots can make a cam session feel a lot more intimate and individual. What I mean by this is, for example, holding the webcam in your hand and facing it downwards towards your dick, then moving it closer whilst you jerk off, giving the viewer an up-close and personal view.

Alternatively if you're female you might want to place the webcam slightly below your breasts then angle it facing upwards so they're taking up the majority of the screen – this will make them inevitably look larger, and your viewer(s) will feel as if they're on their knees below you looking up in admiration – this would work perfect for any sub/dom 'worship' based sessions.

Some of the HD webcams can admittedly be quite expensive, but think of it as an investment – if you're camming on a tipping based site more people are going to be drawn into your room if the picture clarity is crisp and clear. And if you're camming one-on-one for a specific client then a webcam with a great autofocus will work wonders when it comes to their requests to see things up close in high definition.

The first professional webcam I bought was the **HP HD 4310** – with 1080p widescreen capability and decent auto focus. I now use that as a back up webcam, having more recently invested in a **Logitech C920** – popular among many webcam performers for its crystal clear clarity, widescreen view and above all else, it's amazing autofocus (for me it certainly holds the gold standard when it comes to that alone!)

'**Lighting set up**' and room set up are something that should be considered together. Even if you haven't yet the

money to invest in a high-end webcam, a well lit camming space can make more of a difference than you may have imagined! The general rule

of thumb is that you want most of the light to be hitting you from the front. Any flexible lamp is capable of doing this. My lighting setup's actually pretty simple – I generally just use a standard desk lamp that I place high up on a shelf behind my laptop and adjust so the light's reflected on to me. I have overhead lighting in the room which isn't too intense, so I generally keep that on most of the time too so the backgrounds clearly visible, but not the main focus point of my stream.

'**Room set up**' is something that varies from cammer to cammer, but you want to keep all your essentials (everything I went over in **Tip #4** and anything else that may be specific to you as a performer) as close by as possible. As someone who cams primarily for the kink/fetish community, I get a lot of 'Do you have a leather harness? Or a rubber vest?' requests. I make sure to always keep these pieces in close proximity, in a box underneath my desk, so I can access them with ease and show them off on cam when needed.

'**Games**' aren't for every performer but for me I like to provide as interactive as an experience for my viewers as I possibly can. The dice game I mentioned in my July 9th entry (which I advertise online as '**Feti$h Casino**') is my personal go-to, but there are plenty of other ideas for games that can keep your regulars enticed, and help draw in new viewers while you're at it. I've seen other cammers offer raffle-based games where viewers purchase a ticket for a pre-determined amount and if their ticket is chosen (usually the 'host' will place all the raffle tickets in a bag or box, then choose one at random), then the viewer who purchased it can either make a request, or there will be an action pre-written on the back of the ticket (show feet, lick armpits, dildo play) which the performer will then carry out.

These are merely a few suggestions – be creative and inventive! There are many variations you can come up with to keep things fresh and exciting in your room, and there's never any harm in trying out something new. If it doesn't work, scrap it, forget about it for the time being and give things a little re-think when you're ready. Don't be afraid to ask your viewers for suggestions or help either – you might be surprised by what they're able to come up with!

SIX – The monkey on my back

I'll open this chapter with one of my final journal entries – or rather, a message I posted publically on my **Tumblr** blog as a bit of an update for my fans, following a period of time where I'd been broadcasting less and less frequently. Firstly though, a little explanation behind it all…

In the period between my last entry and this one – a near 2 month timeframe, I was having a bit of a tough time to say the least.

The biggest problem I was facing was my growing dependence on benzodiazepines. Since Jordan had first offered me valium way back in February, I had seen it as the perfect form of relief for my anxiety; the answer to all my problems. When I'd ran out of the tablets he'd given me, I scoured the internet in search of more and was soon pill popping a variety of benzos, both prescription and legal (research chemicals sold online under the pretence of being '*Not for human consumption*') on a daily basis to alleviate my nerves, stress and the growing pressure I felt under to perform and live up to the hype that I'd created. The hype of being '**Jmatt93**'.

By this point I'd developed quite a big online following and had a self-written article published on the **Cam4** blog, which was later adapted into an easier digestible interview format and featured alongside my photos in both '**Dirtyboyz**' and '**QX**' magazine. I was climbing the metaphorical ladder of online fame and was no longer a clueless newcomer. I was, at least to anyone looking in, a self made success story and experienced cammer – 'the poster boy of **Cam4**'. But my accomplishments, sadly, didn't come without a price.

Benzos are a *highly* addictive class of drugs, and it wasn't until I ran out of them, whilst waiting for my next order to arrive, that I started to experience the physical and mental withdrawal effects of sudden cold-turkey detox.

Without realising it I'd developed a physical dependence upon them, and the longer I went without, the harder it was to function. Insomnia, muscle spasms, suicidal thoughts, tremors and manic episodes were just some of the side effects I was finding myself having to deal with. It made it impossible for me to cam when I was in withdrawal…

Sept 7th, 2015

What's up guys? Beyond the occasional photo post,

it's been quite a while since I properly updated you on certain aspects of my life (camming to be precise) so I thought I'd let you know how I'm getting on with that at the moment…

I had a bit of a rough patch a few months back, which ultimately led to a lot of anxiety over 1-on-1 Skype shows and a few disappointed customers, so, though they were certainly nice little earners, I've cut back on them for the time being and decided to focus mostly exclusively on promoting myself via Cam4 once more. I hope my Skype regulars aren't too disappointed with this decision. I will be back on top form eventually, just please allow me some time to get into a better mental space (I'm getting there… slowly)

I've been trying to get more organised and keep to a better schedule recently so my subscribers know in advance when I plan to go live, and so far that's working out pretty well. I'm also massively grateful for all the tokens, 5 star ratings and retweets. Particularly from Cam4 themselves who always seem to share via Twitter when I'm broadcasting live.

My shows have certainly progressed from my early days as a performer and are definitely more extreme than they used to be, but I don't view that as a bad thing per se. I feel like with camming you have to grow and adapt with your audience and be prepared for whatever requests might come your way. With access to a growing supply of gear/toys I find I can quite easily cater to a variety of different fetishes, now more than ever before, though I must admit inserting a banana into my anus (as I did this weekend) was in fact a first for me. Not gonna lie though, I did kinda like it!

I've cammed consistently for the last 5 nights in a row so am allowing myself a few days down time to retain my sanity and regroup. I've got nearly $500 sitting in my account (solely from Cam4) from the last month alone so there's definitely still money to be made. Some nights are better than others but I'm taking strides and getting my confidence back so that's something hugely positive I feel :]

Hope you're all well. Feel free to send me an 'ASK' if you have any questions, or hit me up on twitter – twitter.com/jmatt93cam

All the best!

Jmatt93 x

I'm not sure how much of that entry was me trying to save face and reassure both myself and my audience that things were going OK. On reflection I'm fairly certain I was high when I wrote it, but I was doing what I felt was expected of me, and trying to maintain the viewership I'd built up, and capitalise on that financially.

With regards to my benzodiazepine addiction, my tolerance was fast growing and I found myself having to order more and more just to get me through the day. Most of my earnings went on that alone. I knew I needed help, but the doses I was now taking were so extreme that I feared I was a lost cause.

I pushed it to the back of my mind, focused on performing and tried to order online far enough in advance that I was never without for more than a day.

#TIP 6 – MANAGING SOCIAL MEDIA, BUILDING AND MAINTAINING AN AUDIENCE

In the modern digital age of today, it's important to keep up to date with your fans and promote yourself, especially if your job is online based.

For any webcam performer, I'd say it's pretty much essential that you set up a **Twitter** account with a link to your camming profile, and try and update as often as you can to let your followers know when you plan to be online, as well as sharing pics or short video clips that will hold their interest.

Try and connect with other performers and be sure to respond in a timely manner to anyone who tweets @ you. Not only is it the polite thing to do, it also shows that you're easily accessible, and happy to engage and communicate. Don't ignore your followers – if you isolate them then you're alienating your fan base which is the worst thing anyone trying to make a living out of camming could possibly do.

As well as Twitter, I myself also have accounts on **Tumblr** and **Instagram**, a **Facebook 'fan page'** (separate from my personal one), and channels on both **Xtube** and **Youtube**. The saying goes 'don't put all your eggs in the same basket' – meaning the more online profiles you have, the more chance you have of gaining new followers and fans.

Take caution though, as it can at times prove difficult to keep them all up to date with fresh content – bear this in mind when signing up to anything new, and don't ever bite off more than you think you can chew!

SEVEN – Opportunity Knocks!

I was first approached by the team who were in charge of shooting the documentary '**Webcam Boys'** in mid **November**. It was pitched to me pretty straightforwardly – an exploration in to the world of male webcamming through the eyes of the performers themselves, to be aired in early **2016** as part of a season of shows on **BBC3** entitled '**One Click Away**'.

I know they'd been looking for guys to take part in the show from as far back as early October, so was a bit surprised that they'd got in touch with me so late. But apparently there'd been some big table meeting between the **BBC3** team and **Cam4** (In my imagination I always picture a board room filled with lots of men and women in suits sat around a great long table, sipping their vending machine coffee's and diligently taking notes, but I'm sure in reality it was a lot more casual). David Thomas, the marketing director of **Cam4**, had put my name forward as a suggestion of someone who might be of interest to them.

It couldn't have come at a worse time though really. You'd have thought after reading the email asking me if I was up for taking part, that I'd be chomping at the bit to jump on board, but it must have been a week or so before I even responded.

I'd not been home long – having revisited London after an old mate had invited me over for a Halloween themed house-warming party at his new flat. But things had soon gone awry with the introduction of drugs, including crystal meth and ketamine, neither of which I'd touched since way back in February, and paranoia fuelled accusations from a guy I'd up until then considered a trustworthy friend had left me returning back home feeling wounded and vulnerable.

The whole saga had drained me completely, so much so that the potential glitz and glamour of being a reality TV star seemed like too much to handle. On top of all this, I'd just recently entered into a new relationship – my first since leaving Nick, with a lovely bloke from Bristol called Steve who I'd met initially through camming. We'd exchanged messages back and forth for a short while online, then he'd come and picked me up in his black VW Golf and brought me over to his flat, where I'd since been spending most of my weekends (excluding the ill fated Halloween trip to London). Steve wasn't my usual type at all. He was softer than my previous boyfriends, more caring and attentive to my needs, naïve and unsure of himself at times, insecure even – but his awkwardness was sort of what endeared me to him the most.

I sat cross legged in his living room on his green leather sofa with my laptop out in front of me, pulled up the email, and called him over from the kitchen area where he was pottering around cleaning dishes.

"So what do you think?" I asked gently, as he read over the contents of the email thoroughly. Steve was always very thorough.

He pondered over it for a moment.

"…well?"

"I don't think you should do it," he said.

"Why?" I replied. "I mean it could have come at a better time admittedly but it *is* an opportunity."

"If it hadn't have been for the whole Halloween ordeal I'd have probably have said consider it, but having seen the effect that had on you, I mean… are you *sure* you could handle something like this?"

"I don't know," I said. "But… maybe it'll be a good thing. To take my mind off all that shit for a little while."

"And you're *completely* comfortable with them filming you camming? What about telling them you have a boyfriend now?"

"Of course I'll mention *you*, why wouldn't I?"

"Because then they're gonna want *me* involved too. We haven't been seeing each other that long at all, I'm not sure I'm comfortable taking part."

"You don't have to take part if you don't want to," I reassured him.

"I want to support you any way I can," he said.

After careful consideration, I replied to the email.

My response was as follows…

> 'Thank you for getting in touch, sorry it's taken me so long to respond.
>
> Truthfully it's been quite a stressful few weeks and I'm not 100% together; been at a bit of a crossroads with drugs creeping in and becoming a bit of an issue again. I feel like if I'm honest about the reality of my life it might all be a little bit too dark and heavy-going for your documentary.
>
> I'm definitely an exhibitionist and there are many things I love about camming, but I'm not the success story I'd like people to think I am. I do my best to chug along but there are times it's a struggle for me to keep to a regular schedule and balance everything else that's going on in my life.
>
> That said, I'd be willing to chat further if you still want to.
>
> I know it's early stages so I'm not going to jump the gun. You have my number/email now anyway if you wish to talk further.

Regards

Joseph / J Matt'

What else *was* there to say? I'd been as honest as I possibly could be. The ball was in their court now…

Soon afterwards, Jamie, who had written the email, called me on my mobile. I didn't recognise the number so was a bit uneasy upon answering but he introduced himself right away, and so I put my best 'phone voice' on.

It was the first time I'd heard back from anyone on the team and I was half expecting him to tell me that I'd left it too late to reply and they were already wrapping up filming, or that what I'd written in my email response had effectively ruled me out of participating. On the contrary though, he seemed very pleased to have finally got hold of me, and was eager to get some answers to his questions. He wanted to know…

- My living situation
- The important people in my life
- How often I cammed
- How much I earned
- What my parents thought about it
- What my boyfriend thought about it
- My availability the upcoming month

I was put on the spot a little bit admittedly, so there were a lot of 'umm's and 'ah's from my side of the conversation – what *is* it about phone calls with strangers that makes me so bloody nervous!?, but I suppose they were pretty standard questions for any TV researcher to want to know the answers to, in order to assess whether I was a good choice for the show or not. I told him right off the bat of my doubts and concerns, but he was very positive and understanding, and made me feel as if there was no pressure to commit to anything right away. Far from being turned off by what I'd told him, he actually said that he thought my particular situation was interesting (camming from my family's outhouse, new boyfriend on the scene etc.), and that my story was something that the team were especially keen to hear more of. Jamie told me to think things over and get back to him.

The next day I'd yet to respond, but received an email from Jamie once more. He asked me if I'd thought things through yet and whether or not I'd be willing to consider an 'informal meeting' – basically he was prepared to travel down to Bristol and meet with Steve and I to discuss things in a little more detail.

Steve was up for it and interested to know more, (if perhaps naturally still a little sceptical of the agenda behind it all), and Jamie made it very clear that by meeting with him, neither of us were

committing formally to anything. He just wanted, I think, to get a gauge for what I was like in person, what I was willing, or unwilling, to be filmed doing, and how I came across on camera. By camera, I mean a short video interview he'd shoot on his I-phone, that he could take back to London and show the rest of the team.

He arranged to take the train down from London to Bristol early the following morning, and Steve drove the two of us down to Temple Meads train station where we were to meet with him.

He emerged from the station entrance looking slightly like a lost University student, dazed; and clearly searching for me (he hadn't yet seen what Steve looked like) amongst the great flock of people that surrounded him. Jamie was tall and slim, with slightly hipster length hair and oversized prescription glasses. There was little to be intimidated about when it came to his appearance. We made eye contact and headed over to greet him.

"At last!" he cried. "We meet!"

He spoke with a gentle northern accent. We shook hands politely.

"I'm Joseph," I said. "Or J Matt… I know it's one or the other anyway."

He laughed.

"I *know* who you are," he said. "And you must be Steve?"

"How's it going?"

"Great thanks!" Jamie replied enthusiastically. "Right, shall we get down to business then?"

The three of us strolled together to a small café just a few blocks away from the station entrance where we sat and ordered coffee. We made small talk and then Jamie clarified once more the premise of the show. They'd already been filming a couple of lads by this point (which I wasn't surprised by, I had been pretty late to respond), but were particularly interested in me and my background. What it was that had led me to camming in the first place, what a typical show was like for me, and what my peers thought about it all, or if they were even aware.

He whipped out his iPhone and started filming, as 1 by 1 I answered his bullet-point questions as best as I could. I'm a terrible actor (I failed my final GCSE drama performance with what must have been the most abysmal portrayal of Macbeth), but when it comes to just being myself, I like to think I'm pretty engaging and charismatic, even if I do have a tendency to say '*like*' rather a lot.

I reiterated much of what we'd already gone over on the phone and via email, but went into greater detail as to what my shows involved – particularly the masochistic, kinky nature of many of them, and, of course, my passion for fetish wear. By this point I was quite enjoying the attention, and more keen to be involved than I had been

before.

Steve sat next to me throughout but declined to be filmed, although he chimed in occasionally to clarify some of my answers, so his voice was on film if nothing else.

The whole meeting was over within the space of an hour. Steve only had to take me back to his flat – a 10 minute drive away, whereas Jamie had a train to catch again all the way to London. I felt rather sorry for him in that respect, he must've been knackered by the end of the day! I suppose he was used to cross country trips though, working in that field. There's *so* much running around in the lead-up to putting a show together; *so* much that goes on behind the scenes in the months and weeks before the show is ready for air. And then you sit down and watch it when it's all been polished up nicely through the magic of TV editing, thinking nothing of what went in to making it, or quite how much effort it took. I take my hat off to all of the people involved in the research and production process; I don't think I could ever have the stamina to do what they do, and deal with how chaotic it can be at times.

#TIP 7 – MAKING THE MOST OF OPPORTUNITIES

When I first started camming, I never dreamt of the opportunities that might come my way, and it wasn't until about 3 months in to working that they started to arise. First on the horizon were offers to do porn films or nude photo shoots with guys who, to me, seemed to have little to no credibility…

I've always been reluctant to do studio porn, having heard firsthand from others who have done it themselves how laborious and staged it can be. And as for photo shoots? I still was far from confident with my body when I wasn't in control of displaying it, and wasn't prepared to get my kit off in front of a man and his camera, when in fact all he likely wanted was to get in to my pants. No thanks!

For the first 9 months of my camming career, all of my photographs, videos, and any other media featured across my profiles had been entirely self produced.

I quite enjoyed being something of a 'one man band' though – I liked putting together little collages to advertise my cam shows and working with **Photoshop**. Having taken Photography at college and excelled in computer graphics it was something I was pretty clued up on.

I always enjoyed being interviewed, and wrote my fair share of articles for sites including '**Gay Star News**' and the '**Cam4**' blog to raise my profile. My advice to anyone looking to get their name out there would be – don't be afraid to approach websites or companies yourself with a pitch. The worst they can do is say no, but you might be surprised to find out they'd be more than happy to interview you or have you involved in a feature. All of these things are positive strives in the right direction if you're truly invested in making a career out of camming.

One of the most recent offers I was given was the chance to appear on a **Channel 5** show called '**Sex Pod**' with my boyfriend. The premise of the show was that the two of us would be filmed having sex in front of an audience and a panel of 'sexperts'. For what purpose exactly? I'm still not quite sure, but needless to say I didn't need to give that one a second thought, and both Steve and I politely declined the invitation.

Think carefully before agreeing to do anything, and don't be blind sighted by the promise of fame and fortune. Do your research and don't work with anyone who expects you to pay an advance in cash – it's very likely a scam!

If you're looking to build a modelling portfolio, I highly recommend signing up to **ModelMayhem.com** – a social networking websites for models and photographers to connect. It takes a little while to learn to navigate the site, but you can get a better idea of who's legitimate, experienced and professional when it comes to capturing portraits, and who simply doesn't have a clue.

After our brief chat with Jamie, Steve and I were both left in the dark a bit, not knowing if the execs back at BBC London head office had any intent to take my story any further. Then, whilst at home the next day, the landline rang. My mum answered, before passing the phone over to me.

"Hello," I said, cautiously.

"Is that Joseph?", came a voice I didn't recognise, from the other end of the line.

"It is. Who's this?"

"My name's Mobeen," the man said. "I'm the producer and director of the show '**Webcam Boys**', is now a good time to talk?"

"As good a time as any," I said, retreating to my bedroom to light a cigarette.

"I know that you and… Steve is it?"

"Steve, yeah."

"Right, I know the two of you met with my colleague Jamie on Monday."

"Mmhm – yeah that's right."

"I was wondering if you'd had any more thoughts about taking part. Basically we *really* like your story and think you'd be a *really* good fit for the documentary based on what we've seen so far. Are you still interested?"

"Umm."

Why was I always like this on the phone? Of course I was bloody interested!

"Sure," I said coolly. "Yeah, I'm up for it."

"That's great!" he said. "Could you possibly give me Steve's number so I could speak with him also?"

"Sure."

I relayed the phone number to Mobeen.

"That's brilliant Joseph, and is there anyone else you can think of that'd be willing to appear? You live with your parents don't you?"

'*Yeah, Thanks for reminding me,*' I thought…

"Yeah, I cam from an outhouse on their land."

"Right. Would your mum or dad d'you think be open to appearing on camera?"

I laughed. I'd mentioned the documentary to my mum briefly in passing but now it was coming down to it, I wasn't sure she would be willing to discuss what she knew of her son's sex performances in a televised documentary. As for my dad? That was out of the question. I knew he'd want nothing to do with it.

"I'm not sure yet. I'll have to ask," I replied, diplomatically.

"If you could do that that'd be brilliant," he said. "I'll drop you an email after I've spoken to Steve and we'll go from there. Have you got any questions?"

In reality there were probably a million questions I wanted to know the answer to, but nothing sprung to mind.

"Umm… no, I don't think so."

"Great! I'll talk to you soon then," he said. "*Bye Joseph!*"

I placed the phone back on the receiver. I was quite sure by this point already that I in fact *did* want to take part. I knew it would mean lifting the veil on the character I'd spent months crafting (J Matt, the Hyde to my Jekyll) and facing up to the reality of my living situation. But I felt compelled to tell my story. And to tell it as truthfully as I was going to be able to get the opportunity to do.

I was sick of feeling misunderstood – judged by people who only caught snapshots of my life online and thought that they knew me. It would mean letting my guard down, being honest, and making the most of an opportunity that had quite literally fallen in to my lap. I'd be lying if I said I didn't want the fame and the fans it might bring me. But more than that, I wanted to speak out about my struggles in London with drugs and escorting, my troubled history with men, and how through turning to camming I was just a regular guy trying to earn a decent living and finally gain some independence.

Yes, *of course* I knew I'd taking a gamble by putting my story in the hands of strangers, and be opening myself up to criticism. But I was prepared to put myself out on the line (as both J Matt *and* Joseph) and deal with that, if it meant even just 1 person out there could relate to my story, watch the show and be like "I get you" or "I understand why it is that you're doing this".

Still, it wasn't all about what *I* wanted. While I'd come around to actually *wanting* to take part, albeit with a little persuasion, Steve had been turning things over in his head, and had started to have his own reservations about appearing on the show. Picking me up one weekend to drive me back to his place, I remember having quite a heated discussion in his car.

The two of us had both had several phone conversations with Mobeen by this point, so had somewhat of an idea of the direction he wanted to take regarding including our relationship as part of the documentary.

"I just have a bad feeling about it all," he said. "If you want to do this it's fine and I'll support you, but… I work in a very corporate environment, with my job and everything. They could quite easily edit me to look like some sleazy older guy who's taking advantage of you, and I'm not at all comfortable with that!"

"I don't think that's true *at all,*" I responded. "I think it's certainly of interest to them, the fact that we met online, the fact that…"

"But what does that say about *me*?" he interrupted.

"Lots of guys browse cam sites," I said.

"I want to do it for you, but my heart's telling me no. If this were three or four months down the line in to seeing each other then the answer might be different but… I mean Mobeen said he'd like to film us just doing whatever we usually do. What *do* we ever even do together?"

"Other than just hang out at your place?"

"Exactly," he said. "I mean, I thought about going bowling or for a meal or something but, we've yet to even do that *without* the cameras being there. And what are we supposed to talk about?"

"How we met. How you feel about my camming and what you

like and don't like about it. If we ever cam together or not. Our plans for the future… In a nutshell I think that'll be about it," I said.

We both took a pause for breath for a minute at the traffic lights and sat tensely in our seats, puffing hard on our cigarettes. This whole situation was proving to be a *lot* more stressful than I could have ever imagined it would be.

Why is nothing in life ever straightforward?

EIGHT – Lights, Camera, Action!

After something of a tug-of-war scenario, which involved several discussions between Steve and the production team, he finally agreed to take part – on the basis that he was filmed always from behind and that his face was not shown on camera. I think ultimately it came down to the reservations he had about work and how he might be judged negatively if he was seen to be dating a cam boy he'd picked up off the internet, particularly seeing as there was quite a considerable age difference between the two of us.

Things were taking shape though, and moving along much faster with his, and now my mum's agreement to take part.

While **Mobeen Azhar** was still the head of the team, I'd been introduced and passed over to, for the time being, **Jessica Reid** – the DV Director on board the show, and it was with her that most of the plans for filming were made. We communicated via email and telephone almost daily for about a week.

Initially she'd bombarded me with questions I'd already answered before, which was tiresome to say the least, but it did make perfect sense. She wanted to know as much about my life and the people in it as possible, in order to come up with a filming schedule that was practical and would work within the context of the documentary.

Whenever I spoke to Jess on the phone she always sounded so bubbly and full of enthusiasm, as if I was an old friend she hadn't heard from for years, but I admit I had my initial reservations about her.

'How can *anyone* be *this* happy all the time?' I thought to myself.

Knowing how ruthless the media can be, I suspected her sunny demeanour was to lull me into a false sense of security, and that she was actually probably a heartless bitch deep down inside, who simply couldn't *wait* for me to trip up and make a fool of myself. I know these kind of people exist within this field of work, but I will hold my hands up and admit that when it came to Jessica, I could not have been more wrong.

Jess is one of the sweetest girls I've ever come across in the business, and one of the hardest working too! Even throughout filming, when things weren't going 100% as they should've been, she would always have a smile on her face and try her best to keep everyone around her as comfortable, calm and collected as possible. Jess, if you're reading this, I'm sorry I was sceptical and had such pre-conceived ideas about you. I don't think I could've coped with the amount of stress I was put under at times without you by my side. I really don't know how you do it, but thank you!

We managed to put our heads together and came up with a filming schedule that would work, at least on paper.

On **Thursday 3rd December**, I met Jessica and Mobeen in person for the very first time when they pulled up outside our family house in a white Kia Pro-cee'd. It was **11am** – still quite early in the day for me, but as I knew they were going to start filming I'd gotten up an hour earlier than usual to shower, and prep and preen myself to make sure I looked camera ready.

"Hi Joseph!" Mobeen said.

"Hi!" squealed Jess, as they both entered, loaded up with bags, through the back conservatory doorway.

Mobeen was tall with dark Pakistani skin and a slightly wacky sense of fashion. He was a very warm character and would crack jokes constantly.

Jess, by comparison, was much shorter – a blonde haired, blue eyed beauty with a smile that lit up the room. She struck me as your typical 'girl next door'.

We all gathered in the kitchen where I introduced them to my mum and our family pets – the two cats, Ruby and Sapphire, and Sooty, our yappy little terrier (who, it must be said, proved to be *quite* the nuisance during filming segments where background silence was a necessity).

Jess fitted me with a microphone-pack and I sat in the conservatory of the house, next to my tanning bed, where Mobeen pointed his lens at me for the first time. Camera lens that is…

Of course the two of them had already seen me on camera before, but this time around it was a little different than talking casually into Jamie's little I-Phone in a small café back in Bristol.

"This might feel a little weird Joseph," Mobeen said, "I'm going to be asking you the questions but I want you to make eye contact with Jess" (who was positioned to the side of him. She gave a little wave at the mention of her name).

"And also, my voice *might* be on the documentary in parts, but I want you to try and answer in full sentences as best as you can. Understood?"

I nodded my head.

"Perfect," he said, dragging out the words 2 syllables as he adjusted his equipment and popped on a pair of head phones. "Right… would you mind introducing yourself to those who don't know who you are?"

I looked to Jess.

"My name's Joseph. I'm 22 years old and, and I'm a webcam boy."

"And what does that mean Joseph?"

“Basically what that means is that I put on adult webcam shows over the internet for an audience, and get paid to fulfil people’s requests, usually sexual, in exchange for tokens and cash.”

“Excellent. You’re doing *really* well Joseph, just keep that eye contact with Jess going.”

Mobeen paused for a second then peered back into the cameras viewfinder. I could hear the subtle noise of the camera zooming in and out while he spoke to me, but tried my best to shut it out and focus on giving the best – or at least the most straightforward answers that I could.

“So Joseph, is there any particular stage name you use when you do these performances?”

“Yeah… when I perform online I perform under the name of J Matt, or JMatt93, that’s kind of my alternate camming persona,” I said.

I could feel the camera still focusing in on me, but froze.

“I don’t know what else to say.”

“You can relax now,” Mobeen said reassuringly, taking off his headphones and placing the camera out of range. “I think you’re a natural at this!”

“*Definitely!*” cried Jess, “Well done you!”

“Thanks guys,” I said, lighting up a cigarette. “I can’t pretend I don’t like the attention of it all.”

I let out a nervous giggle.

“I think we’re gonna have a *really* good shoot with you,” Mobeen said.

“I’m excited.”

And truly, I was!

None of that first footage made it into the documentary, but then I hadn’t ever expected it to. It was merely a test run, so I could get comfortable in front of the camera, and with Mobeen and Jessica themselves.

Jess and Mobeen made a few trips back and to to their vehicle to gather all the necessary equipment, and then we hit the road!

The schedule for that day was to spend the afternoon with one of my friends from school (of the few I’d kept in touch with) at her place. Paige had settled down in a council flat not far from where I was living, having hooked up with a guy from my year named Mitchell. She’d got pregnant on the cusp of 17 and they now had a 4 year old daughter together called Aria, who was the spitting image of her mum, right down to her fiery red hair. Being a mum has done wonders for Paige, and a dad the same I think for Mitchell.

It had been Paige’s birthday the week before but I hadn’t had chance to see her yet, so the plan was that I was going to arrive with a

present and cake for her, wish her a happy birthday, and then the two of us would be filmed reminiscing on 'the good ol' days' and how she'd felt about things like – I imagined, my move to London, my drug use and my subsequent camming career.

We were (Jess, Mobeen and I) there for a good few hours and I thought managed to capture some really great footage. The presence of the TV cameras didn't seem to faze Paige in the slightest and she and I got along chatting as normal. I brought along an issue of '**Dirtyboyz**' magazine in which I was featured that month to whip out and show her. It was a two page spread headlined '**Cam4-The Site to Cum4**' which featured a collection of pictures lifted from my online profile – complete with an interview piece they'd adapted from an article I'd written for the **Cam4** blog.

I think she may have been a little taken-aback at the sight of my erect cock in the photos presented before her, but it *was* a porn magazine, I mean, what did she expect? Otherwise she was most enthralled and interested.

"So is this whole camming thing… something you'd have ever expected me to be doing?" I asked. "Honestly?"

"I wouldn't say it's something I necessarily *expected* you to do," she replied. "But when I heard about it, I can't say it surprised me. You've always kind of been a bit wild like that and it totally fits with your personality."

"You mean I've always liked taking my clothes off?" I joked.

It was funny. I had a flashback to a memory of back when we were teenagers. We'd all gotten so drunk one evening in town and I'd stood on top one of the tables outside the fish and chip shop, pulled my pants down and flashed my bare arse cheeks to the neighbours. The picture evidence is probably still floating around on Facebook somewhere!

"I'm really proud of you Joey," she said, all of a sudden sounding serious.

"*Why?*" I asked

"Well, you're doing your own thing, you're not hurting anyone, and you seem to be doing well for yourself… um, I do have to ask though. How much do you actually *make* doing all this?"

"Why? Were you and Mitch thinking about doing 'camming for couples'," I teased. "Honestly, it varies so much. I know I could earn more if I really put in the hours but ultimately it comes down to how often you're prepared to work. I make enough to get by on and splurge occasionally, and that's fine by me."

"Right," she said, half ignoring the answer to my question having seemingly lost interest midway though. Paige was now flicking through the pages of **Dirtyboyz** and fawning over the other eye candy

in the mag. “Sorry, I just can’t help myself!”

“I think we should put that away now!” I laughed.

I was truly having such a great time catching up with Paige that I’d almost forgotten that the documentary crew were there at all.

That was until Mobeen gave a thumbs up signal from the other side of the room, and said…

“Right, that was *great* guys!”

He then asked us to continue talking (“about anything, it doesn’t matter” he said) whilst he zoomed in and started taking some footage of our hand gestures, and other things to potentially “cut to in the edit”.

As it so happened, unfortunately none of the footage from my trip to see Paige made it in to the final broadcast at all. I was disappointed, admittedly, as I felt it had gone so well, and I knew she’d be a little sad when I broke the news to her, but, as she herself put it, “I guess that’s showbiz!”

I don’t like to think of it as a whole afternoon wasted, because to me it wasn’t wasted at all. I got the chance to see one of my dearest friends and wish her a happy birthday. That in itself was enough.

Also, on reflection, I recall I’d used a new self-tanning product the night before and had arrived looking slightly over bronzed. One of the first things she’d said to me within minutes of the cameras having started rolling was “Joey, you look orange” – I was mortified!

Then there was the fact they’d somehow persuaded me to sing a solo rendition of ‘**Happy Birthday**’ to Paige while I presented her with her birthday cake and she blew out the candles. Yeah, maybe on reflection it was for the best that scene landed on the cutting room floor…

Afterwards, Mobeen and Jess headed back to the B+B they were staying at and dropped me off back home on the way. Filming was done for the day, but they were due back at our house that evening at **7.30pm**, to shoot me preparing to go on cam, and then the inevitable – me *actually* putting on a cam show! I tried to push that thought to the back of my head. It was just a part of what I’d signed up for and something I had no choice but to go through with now.

My cam shows – though I often drew in a lot of viewers, were usually quite intimate (along with sleazy, kinky, and occasionally borderline disgusting…)

The space in which I cammed wasn’t massive, but it was big enough for me to manoeuvre my way around in and have access to everything I needed. I worried how that was going to work with the presence of two others, both carrying heavy duty cameras there also.

There was so much going through my head. I popped a few anti-anxiety tablets to take the edge off and tried not to think of it, but

couldn't help myself from watching the clock tick by. 7.30pm was drawing nearer and nearer…

#TIP 8 – MY PRE-CAMMING ROUTINE, TANNING AND MAINTENANCE

Obviously not every cam show I prepare for gets filmed for television but I definitely try and stick to something of a routine in the run up to hitting that 'Broadcast' button, and I think every performer should.

I own a home sun bed and use that – or visit a tanning salon, at least 3 or 4 days a week. I know how bad this is for your skin in the long run and I'm certainly not recommending it for its health benefits, but it helps me unwind, and gives my naturally pale skin a bit of a glow in preparation for my fake tan application.

Fake tan is my secret weapon to looking my best on cam, and I've now got my routine pretty much down to a tee…

Firstly, I take a long exfoliating bath the evening before I plan on applying it, to scrub away at any dead skin cells and make sure I'm all fresh and clean. I also use a face mask once a week (usually a deep exfoliating one, as fake tan tends to get stuck in my pores) – and then send whatever facial stubble I've acquired by then (bar the moustache… the moustache stays!) drifting away down the sink.

The following morning I'll get naked (Shock! Horror!) and apply the '**Cocoa Brown**' 1 hour dark tan mousse (it comes in a bright pink bottle and they sell it in '**Superdrug**'), using gloves and a tanning mitt – starting at my feet and working my way upwards, in circular motions. When I'm finished tanning up to my face (I suggest using a set-up that involves two mirrors so you can see from behind how things are looking as well), I take off my gloves and squeeze a tiny blob of the mousse on to the front side of one of my hands. I'll then rub the backs of both the front of my hands together, down to the fingertips so they're both evenly covered – then fix any patchy areas using make up pads (the dry ones meant for cleansing) to dab the tanning mousse over any remaining white bits.

Next I'll stick my Union Jack onesie on and lounge around the house for 3 hours (you can wash it off after 1

hour but 3 tends to give a deeper tan, and I like to look as dark as possible), before rinsing it off in the shower.

Though I still don't stick to what most would consider a regular camming schedule, I do tend to put on most of my performances in the evening. If I know I'm likely to be camming that evening I'll try and eat as light as possible throughout the day and shower and douche – VERY important if you're a guy who offers anal play as part of his bag of tricks, unless you're trying to cater specifically to the scat crowd! I do all of this a couple of hours prior to broadcasting to ensure I'm thoroughly clean everywhere that matters.

Once I've selected which outfit I'm going to wear that particular evening and which accessories I'm going to team it with I'm good to go. If I'm wearing one of my wrestling singlet's I'll sometimes rub baby oil over my shoulders and biceps before I begin to bring out any muscle definition, and then it's just a case of setting up my lighting and choosing a good angle (all things I've gone over in **Tip #5**)

As for body hair, I like to remain fairly hairy, but probably have a good clipper trim over my stomach and chest hair once every couple of months so it doesn't get too out of control. I trim my pubes and shave my ball sack in the shower at least once a week.

I was to-ing and fro-ing over the silliest of little things – whether to wait till Mobeen and Jessica had arrived before taking a shower, or doing so before they got here. Showering was obviously a big part of getting ready, but I didn't know if they were likely to want a shot of me maybe leaving the shower with wet hair before proceeding to dry it, or something of that nature. That's the thing with TV people, even if they don't use half the shots – which they don't; they still want to capture them, just in case. I was trying to be two steps ahead of them, so I was prepared at every turn.

In the end though, at about 7.15 I thought 'Fuck it!' – and decided I'd shower right then and there. As I hopped out the shower, threw on some pyjama bottoms and a hoody (my usual choice of attire before stripping down to fetish lingerie or going nude) and started to dry my hair, I heard our dog Sooty barking relentlessly downstairs, in a way that could only mean one thing – we had visitors. Jessica and Mobeen were here.

I hurried downstairs to greet them.

"Hey guys!" I said.

Both my mum and dad were home and Jess and Mobeen were standing in the corner of the kitchen, again loaded up with rucksacks full of equipment, making small talk with my parents – *slightly* awkward when you consider the fact that they'd be filming me naked in the outhouse in just under an hour!

"Hello," said Jess.

"Hi Joseph, how are you doing?" asked Mobeen.

"Good thanks, you?"

"Brilliant," he replied.

"You alright Jess?" I asked.

"I'm great thanks Jo."

Mobeen turned to address my parents.

"I'm thinking if you guys don't mind, would it be OK to leave our bags and some of our equipment out in the conservatory, and just have a brief chat with Joseph?"

It was my dad he was truly seeking permission from, as he was the man of the house – and it seemed only polite, being as they were strangers in his home.

"Sure, get on with what you need to do," he said.

"*Excellent.* Joseph, have you showered?" Mobeen asked.

"Yeah, I just finished before you got here," I said.

"*Brilliant.* Right, shall we head to the conservatory then?"

"Sure," I said, making my way over, and gently shutting the kitchen door behind me so we had at least a little privacy.

"So," I said. "What's the plan?"

"Well we wanna film you getting ready, so I'm just wondering if there's any sort of tradition or ritual you usually do before you put on one of your shows?"

"Mmhm," I said, gesturing towards the sun bed in the corner.

"I always try and get at least 15 minutes on the tanning bed before each show."

"But you're *so* brown already!" shrieked Mobeen in sheer disbelief.

"I know," I laughed, "but it relaxes me, and I like to look as dark as possible because I feel like with all the lights in my cam room it kinda… I always look lighter on webcam I guess is what I'm trying to say."

"Fair enough," Jess said. "Can't argue with that."

"Right well if that's how you normally do things Joseph then I guess that's what we'll shoot," Mobeen said decisively.

I stripped down to my underwear (actually it was Steve's, a really lovely pair of '**AussieBum**' briefs with an almost paisley blue

pattern – I was *always* borrowing his underwear!) and then lay down on the tanning bed under the comforting heat of the fluorescent UV lights. I lit up a cigarette and flicked the ash into a mug on the chair beside me. Is it smart to smoke on sun beds? No, of course not, it's an *awful* thing to do – but it's what I usually do, and if they wanted reality then I was sure as hell gonna give it to 'em.

Regarding smoking, there's a lovely little exchange in the film '**Bridget Jones – The Edge of Reason**' between her and her father that I always relay to people when they tell me I should quit.

> **Dad (to Bridget):** Ciggy?
> **Bridget**: No. No thanks, I've given up again.
> **Dad**: Shame. I find them very useful. I take great comfort in the fact that they might kill me before things actually get worse

Need I say more?

After filming me tanning (and smoking) for a good 10 minutes, I shimmied back into my comfy clothes and the three of us marched off to my cam room. Never before that moment had I been *so* aware that I'd signed up to take part in a show called '**Webcam Boys**' and now had to prove my worth. *The pressure was well and truly on*.

Of course, I knew that there were quite strict protocols in place as to what can and can't be shown on **BBC3**, even *after* the watershed, but I was told to just get on with performing my show as I usually would, and there was nothing that wasn't filmed. To an outsider looking in, it certainly would've liked like Jess and Mobeen were filming some sort of gay porno – even if they seemed the most unlikely looking duo to be doing such a thing.

Because of the spatial limitations within my cam room, we didn't have a whole lot of room to work with, and I had to pretty much confine myself to one single corner of the room where the leather sofa was in place to put on my show. It wasn't ideal, but I'm not criticising Jess or Mobeen for that, because I think in actuality it was rather a struggle for all three of us. I remember at one point Mobeen wanted to get a long shot of me addressing my audience (or whatever the fuck I was doing at the time in front of my webcam), and he was literally having to squat down in the space between the toilet and sink in the tiny bathroom opposite me to attempt it. Then he wanted to get a second opinion on whether the shot looked right or not, so he called Jess over and she somehow managed to squeeze herself in between him, the camera, the sink and the toilet (much like some sort of crazy contortionist), just to get a look-in!

Witnessing that whole scene play out whilst trying to keep a straight face for my viewers, who had no idea what was going on

directly in front of me, still makes me laugh out loud to this day – madness! And *this* coming from the guy in the arseless wrestling singlet with a ball gag round his neck, who was about to stick some nipple clamps on…

I hadn't decided beforehand how long I intended on broadcasting for, but I was pulling in such a great audience and getting tipped for all sorts of requests that there was no way I was going to stop until my numbers dropped a bit or I was physically unable to carry on. The more engaged I was in my viewers, the less attention I paid to Jess and Mobeen. And I think in a sense that was a good thing because it was exactly what they wanted – J Matt being J Matt. I like to think of it as a wildlife documentary with me as the subject, and the two of them observing me in my natural habitat, with what I imagine to be a fair blend of fascination and disgust.

After close to **3 hours**, and almost **£150** richer, I'd decided that I'd had enough. I blew a kiss into the webcam, thanked my fans for all their support and tokens and then proceeded to end the broadcast.

With one click of a button I found myself suddenly transported back to reality. Here I was, in an outhouse I called my cam room, curled up naked on a leather sofa with two people I'd known for less than a day having just witnessed a sexually-charged webcam performance, carried out solely by me, and taking place right before their eyes. Before I'd clicked the 'End Broadcast' button there were still close to 100 or so people in my chat room – but now it was just me, Jessica and Mobeen. I realised that J Matt had disappeared the moment I'd shut down my laptop, and as Joseph, I suddenly felt extremely vulnerable and exposed. But the cameras were still rolling, and then came Mobeen asking questions…

"So, what was that like for you Joseph?"

I was usually articulate, but realising how strange of a situation I was in, I struggled to find the words to answer that, or in fact *any* of his follow up questions. I think Mobeen, and Jessica too, were surprised by my reaction. I felt like a deer in the headlights.

I'd just made a considerable amount of money, which on any usual night I'd have been celebrating. But, I suppose, I felt embarrassed, having known they'd seen it all play out. I wondered what they thought of me, on a personal level, now that they'd seen me performing as J Matt. I worried it would change how they were going to treat me in the days to come.

I was *tired*. I needed to throw some comfy clothes back on, smoke a cigarette and go and get something to eat. The cam room was a mess, but I left it that way so they could get the 'cut to' shots they wanted for the edit; dildos covered in baby oil, banana skins, an ash tray full of cigarettes – that sort of thing I presumed.

My parents were in bed by this time. I left Jess and Mobeen to their business and took momentary solace in some alone time in the kitchen with a plate of reheated cheese and onion quiche, then said my goodbye's when they were finished.

I had no trouble sleeping that night. When my head finally hit the pillow I was well and truly exhausted!

The next day we were scheduled for another **11am** filming start. I got up at about **10.15** to get camera ready, which was less time than I'd allowed myself the day before, but as I had already picked out what I was going to wear, all I had to do was take a quick shower and fix my hair and I was good to go.

Jess and Mobeen turned up on time but with the technical setup it took to get all of the equipment ready and 'set the scene' – a casual conversation between my mum and I at the kitchen table, we probably didn't actually get started until closer to 12. With the two of us both mic'd up, Mobeen finally started rolling with his camera.

I led the conversation (having spent enough time with Mobeen, by now I had a pretty good idea of the kind of things he'd want me to discuss), with Mobeen or Jessica interrupting only occasionally to clarify things or have my mum repeat them in a more conversational context – she had a habit of talking '*about*' me as opposed to '*to*' me when on camera.

We went over some old childhood photos and I showed my mum my feature in **Dirtyboyz** magazine – the same one I'd shown to Paige a day earlier. She remarked that she thought they'd done a good job of putting the piece together and that most of the photos were actually quite tasteful.

"See, now that one of you in your bedroom's nice," she said.

That was before she realised that in the picture she was referring to I actually had my hand down my trackie bottoms and was feeling myself down there in a rather provocative way. I didn't have the heart to mention it…

Once we were done filming with my mum, we headed outside. There was a tyre swing hanging from a tree, down by the greenery opposite our house where I used to play as a kid, and Mobeen felt really inspired to get some shots of it. I perched my bum on the edge of it (it had always seemed a whole lot roomier when I was 5 or 6), and did a short interview where I was asked questions mostly geared towards my childhood, and how life had had been for me growing up in the Welsh countryside.

After we were done with that little segment, I was free to roam around for the rest of the day. Freedom in this world, I'd discovered, is when you're not wearing a microphone pack…

That evening though it was back to the cam room.

Jess was fascinated with the idea of my '**Feti$h Casino**' – the dice game I play on occasion with my viewers, and she and Mobeen had asked if I'd be willing to host it that night on cam for them.

It was, again, a little tricky playing the game in such a small space, but I designated myself one hour and just got on with it. They'd asked to see a bit of showmanship from me, so I gave them what they wanted.

"Welcome to my fetish casino!" I announced grandly, "Who's feeling lucky?"

Things felt much less awkward this time around, being filmed by the crew while I cammed. I hadn't promoted my show half as much as I had the one that took place the night before, so my viewing figures were naturally a little lower, but I felt comfortable with that. I was more in control of my audience, and although I didn't earn as much as the previous night – the equivalent of **£40** or so I think by the end of it, once I was done there were no weird feelings of awkwardness. It was – for now, as they say in film and television, a wrap!

NINE – Cross country marathon!

Gazing over the filming schedule Jessica and I had devised together, **Saturday 5th December** was the date I was dreading the most, purely because of all the planning and travelling it involved. I had a photo shoot booked with professional fetish photographer **Matt Spike** the following day in Central London, where I'd be staying in a pre-booked **Travel Lodge** overnight. This meant I had to pack an overnight bag, as well as a suitcase full of fetish wear and accessories that he may or may not want to incorporate into the shoot. The plan was to be all packed and ready for **9.30am** so that Jess, Mobeen and I could hit the road nice and early.

If it had just been a straightforward road trip to London I don't think I'd have felt under quite so much pressure – despite my obvious anxieties about revisiting a city that had come so close to breaking me, but that wasn't the plan…

Firstly we had to head to Bristol (that in itself a good hour's drive from my family home), to a location that Jess and Mobeen had arranged in advance but that none of us had ever set foot in before – **The Mud Dock café**.

From there we had a table reserved for **11** where Steve would be joining us – filmed from the back as he'd had negotiated into his contract with them, and he and I would be ordering lunch whilst talking things over casually – or as casually as one can be when there's a mic-set in your back pocket, a café filled with other customers looking on with curiosity, and a camera penetrating you throughout.

If I'd have been properly organised like I should have been and made sure I got a good nights sleep on Friday it might've taken some of the weight off my shoulders, but I was up until the early hours of Saturday still fretting over what to pack and what to wear. I worked myself into a right old frenzy with it all, and when my phone alarm went off at 8.30am, having only caught about four or five hours sleep at best, frankly I just wanted the ground to swallow me whole.

Jess and Mobeen arrived in the kitchen looking all bright eyed and bushy tailed at 9am, my mum having invited them in.

"Hey Joseph!" Mobeen said cheerfully.

"Looking forward to today?" Jess asked, all smiles.

"It's gonna be great!"

'Oh fuck off,' I thought, pouring myself a strong cup of coffee.

I'd just gotten out of the shower by this point, hair still dripping wet – and was darting all around the house from one room to the next, watching the minutes race by (far too quickly for my liking!),

chugging down my coffee like no tomorrow and puffing on Pall Mall cigarettes in a mass panic to be ready to leave with them on time.

When I finally emerged back downstairs – hair styled, bags packed, and all ready to go, my demeanour was a little less stony and it felt only right to apologise to Jess and Mobeen for largely ignoring the both of them. Luckily they'd had my mum to chat to so it wasn't as if I'd just fucked off upstairs and left them alone, but "Sorry guys, I'm not a morning person" doesn't quite cut it when it's any later than 8. The rest of my family are all up between 6 and 7am for their jobs and they don't make a big deal out of it the way I do.

"You'd *never* cut it in the *real* world," my brother and dad have both said to me on separate occasions.

Though I object to their wording and consider camming as 'real' a job as any, I'm inclined to agree that an early rising 9 to 5 job would probably never work out well for me.

I said my farewells to my mum and loaded my luggage in to the boot of Mobeen's car, which was already pretty full from the amount of bags they'd been travelling around with themselves – rucksacks full of cameras, tripods, battery packs, and a shitload of other heavy equipment, none of which I could identify by name if you'd asked me to.

I was still feeling drowsy by the time we made it to Bristol, and pulled up in to the car park, having arrived at The Mud Dock Café.

The café itself is situated above a mountain bike showroom with a view overlooking Bristol's harbour through perfectly round porthole shaped windows, the kind you'd find on a ship. I'll never forget how windy it was that morning as the three of us made our way inside.

There were a fair few customers already seated at the neighbouring tables. I sat self consciously at the 'reserved' table by myself, while Mobeen prepared for shooting the scene, and Jess had the café manager sign the release form that gave the **BBC** permission to use any footage taken on location there in the documentary.

We had about 15 minutes time to kill before Steve was set to arrive and the cameras would be rolling, so I ordered a cappuccino to sip on whilst I anxiously waited. I knew Steve well enough not to bail on me at the last minute, but I also knew how big of a deal this was for him agreeing to do, so I was particularly nervous for him in the build up to his arrival. I took a Valium to steady my own nerves, though it was he that probably could've done with it more than anyone.

My phone beeped. It was a text message from Steve.

'I'm outside, just parked up,' it read.

I called Jess over to the table.

"Just got a text off Steve," I said. "He's parked up outside

apparently."

"Brilliant," she said. "If you're happy to just wait here while I go and greet him, get him mic'd up and let him know the plan? We're gonna have you meet on camera I think, is that right Mobeen?"

"That's right," he confirmed. "We just wanna capture like a *really* natural reaction from you guys, so talk about whatever it is you generally would if you were going for lunch together and just try and ignore the camera."

"Oh you're easy to ignore Mobeen, you should know that by now," I teased.

I peered through the window looking out on to the parking bay below and saw Jess approaching Steve. I couldn't hear what she was saying to him from two stories up, but she led him inside, and he waited beneath us on the stairway between the bike shop and café. Jess scurried over to Mobeen to confer with him a second then came back over to my table to clarify what was going on.

"Right, we're gonna start rolling in a second," she said. "So we'll get a bit of footage of you sat here on your own waiting for Steve to arrive, then either Mobeen or I will give the thumbs up for him to enter and you can just greet each other as usual, and order some food when you're ready. Sound good?"

"Mmhm."

"Sweet," said Jess, scurrying back a few feet to stand beside Mobeen where the camera was set up on a tripod.

Mobeen put on his headphones and started recording. I sat in my designated seat, central to the camera lens and tried my best to act like I was waiting for someone I knew was standing only a few feet below me and to my left to make their appearance. I didn't even see the thumbs up signal (I was probably too busy twiddling my own thumbs), but I heard the footsteps on the stairs and saw Steve as he approached the top of them. He walked towards me, aware of the camera, but with his back facing towards it, and I got up and embraced him with a gentle hug, and a "Hey! Missed you babe…" before we both took our respective seats opposite one another.

He was wearing a smart blue jumper and dark jeans, and to top it all off? A Burberry cap. He clearly wasn't taking *any* chances when it came to being identified by the shape of his cranium alone! I had to stifle a giggle, but all that being said, he did look like a man with the weight of the world on his shoulders, and I knew how difficult this was for him. The fact he cared enough about me to go through with it in spite of how awkward it was says a lot about him as a person.

"So how have you been?" He asked, his tone conversational, his face reading 'this is fucking weird!'

"Not bad," I said. "I've been busy with camming, as usual."

"And how's that going?" he queried.

"Alright," I replied. "I surpassed my goal twice this weekend so… yeah, it's going good. What about you?"

"Ah, just getting on with work. I've been working from home the last week or so."

A waitress came over to the table to take our orders. I ordered a second cappuccino and a bowl of mixed fruit porridge, whilst Steve opted for a glass of Coke and a full English breakfast. It was honestly the most I'd ever known him to eat, but it's important to note that the crew were funding all our food and drink expenses, so fuck it, *why not*? I'd have ordered something more substantial myself if I wasn't too wary of my weight, knowing I had a photo shoot the following day.

Much of our subsequent conversation revolved around ticking boxes for the cameras. The fact that we met via camming, how Steve felt about my interactions with other men online, his thoughts on me returning to London having known about my past struggles there, and what the future might hold for us as a couple. All potential topics of interest for the audience of the documentary.

When it was time to move on to the next phase of my journey with the crew I felt a mixture of emotions – on the one hand I was happy it was over and done with, because it meant no more pressure for Steve, but on the other hand I was sad to say goodbye to him, and regretted how little time we'd had together. We shared a cigarette on the outside balcony while Jess and Mobeen packed up inside, but beyond that we had no interaction that day that wasn't recorded. I assured him I'd keep in touch and let him know how I was getting on in London, and it would only be a week or so before we saw one another again, but it was bittersweet seeing him that day, and with a heavy heart that I said goodbye.

#TIP 9 – HOLDING DOWN A RELATIONSHIP WHILST CAMMING

Being a webcam performer and holding down a physical, real life sexual relationship at the same time can be peculiar territory, and though some would advise entirely against the idea of dating anyone who first approached you through camming online, I personally don't think it's something you should completely shy away from, or rule out as a possibility.

Please don't get me wrong, I'm not in any way

suggesting you cam with the intention of hooking up with every guy who proposes it (I politely decline 'do you wanna meet up?' requests from total strangers on a daily basis). Keep your wits about you when it comes to meeting up with anyone who first makes contact online, but equally, don't assume that everybody out there is a predatory creep with ulterior motives.

When I got together with Steve we'd been chatting for a short while prior to meeting up and he made it clear to me from the get go that there were no expectations. We met up initially as friends and honestly, our relationship really just grew from there onwards.

One of the best things about being together with someone who first made contact via my camming chat room is that he knew from day one what my job entailed, so there were never any awkward conversations like "so what do you do for a living?"

Steve has been massively supportive in all of my camming endeavours, even letting me broadcast openly from his place, and helping me out with any technical problems I've run in to whilst performing. Although there are times he admits it's difficult to see me flirting so openly with other guys, there's a line between business and pleasure, and it's his bed I'm sleeping in at the end of the night, and he who ultimately gets to share that physical intimacy with me, while others merely pay for a glimpse of my arse on their computer monitor.

As for advice towards anyone entering in to a relationship having not met through camming? Well, it's certainly not your average run-of-the-mill job, and I can see how a lot of potential partners may be put off by it, but I would never advise anyone to keep it a secret, at least beyond the second or third date.

Honesty and integrity is very important in any relationship, and if you get serious and wish to continue camming then they're bound to find out sooner or later, so why not just be upfront about it from the start? Who knows, they might surprise you and even want to get involved themselves? And if it repulses them that much, then well at least you know then and there that they're probably not the one for you!

After saying a rushed and emotional goodbye to Steve, it was back to another round of travelling for me and the team. Mobeen parted ways, to drive back to London, while Jess and I caught a taxi to **Bristol Temple Meads Station** where we hopped on a train to **London Paddington**.

I had a little nap early on in the journey whilst we still had a way to go (she leant me her scarf to lean my head on which I thought was a really sweet gesture!), and then it was business as usual.

The idea was for Jess to interview me on the train as we approached London, with lots of shots in between of me gazing out of the window looking sullen, optimistic, anxious, or whatever else I may have been feeling at the time. Don't get me wrong, I mean she wasn't literally calling out random emotions for me to act out like we were in drama class, but I pretty much knew the score by then.

"So how do you feel that meeting with Steve went?" she asked me, camera balanced precariously over her shoulder.

"Yeah I think the meeting with Steve went well," I responded (full sentences Joey, full sentences!)

"How do you think he feels about you coming to London?"

"I mean… obviously Steve knows about my past history in London so I do think that's something that's gonna be playing on his mind, but… ultimately I'm here for business, y'know? I've never had the chance till now to do a professional photo shoot and I'm hoping it's gonna be a really positive experience for me."

"So, tell me what's changed between the last time you visited London and this time?"

Out of the corner of my eye, I could see some of the fellow train passengers watching and listening in as Jess filmed me, much in the same way that the customers at the Mud Dock café had done earlier that day. But '*fuck it*', I thought. I refused to be distracted and hold myself back as a result. I felt compelled to tell my truth, and if that meant 1 or 2 people thought badly about me then so be it.

"The last time I left London I was a mess," I said, focusing my gaze intently on Jess to avoid stumbling over my words or meeting the stony glare of anyone listening in, "I got so caught up in the drugs side of it all and was just bed hopping from guy to guy, being promiscuous and having a lot of unsafe sex. I think it's safe to say I'd lost all respect I ever had for myself…"

"And the second part of my question?" Jess asked. "What's changed in you this time around, and how does it feel to be going back there?"

"I'm not gonna lie, it's scary revisiting London after all I've been through, but… I feel like enough time has passed now and that I'm a stronger person than I was back then. I just have to focus on the photo

shoot and resist the temptation to fall back into my old ways. There are too many people rooting for me, I can't let them down."

"And… perfect," Jess said, putting the camera to one side. "It really is fantastic how honest you've been with us throughout all this."

I shrugged my shoulders.

"I just wanna tell my story," I said. "That's all really…"

We were edging closer and closer to London and Jess and I would be stepping off the platform in a matter of minutes.

"Don't you ever get bored?" I asked her, off the cuff.

"Of what?" She asked, curiously.

"You go through all the effort of taking all this footage, knowing full well that a great deal of it's not gonna end up making the final cut. Doesn't that bother you?"

"No, I love what I do," she said.

"Like… I see firsthand the amount of effort both you and Mobeen put in. I know if I spent *that* long trying to get 'the perfect shot' I'd be pretty pissed off if no one ever saw it."

"It doesn't bother me," she reiterated, "I get to travel to all sorts of places and meet all kinds of people. It is a hard job but… it's rewarding, y'know?"

I suddenly wondered if I'd crossed a line and was now talking to '**TV talent scout/DV director**' Jessica Reid, as opposed to the girl who had offered me bottled water and her scarf for comfort just an hour prior.

Maybe I was prying too much. Maybe she really *did* love her job as much as she let on. I guess I'll never know. There was no time to think about it any longer either way – we were pulling into **Paddington Station**.

When we hopped off the train the first thing I did was seek out the toilets so I could have a much needed piss (for a 30p charge of course, nothing says 'Welcome back to London' like being charged to use the fucking toilet!), then headed outside to the smokers area for a cigarette. It was early December – frosty and dark outside, and as such, I found it especially hard to enjoy my fag. I was freezing cold and my hands were trembling with every drag of it. In case you haven't sussed by now, I hate the winter…

Jess took a variety of shots of me leaving the station and we waited for a cab to reunite us with Mobeen.

Together once more, the three of us went for an evening meal in a posh Soho restaurant – again, paid for by the team. I even got treated to a Mojito cocktail (my all time favourite!) whilst we killed time until **10.30pm**. That was when **Fifty and Dean** – a gay sex shop located just around the corner on **Old Compton Street**, would be closing its doors to the public and opening them to us. Obviously sex shops

respect the privacy and right to anonymity of their customers, so that was the primary reason we had to wait.

I'm not sure if it was the cocktail that finished me off, the fact that it had been *such* a long day, or a combination of both – but I was well and truly knackered by the time we made it to **Fifty and Dean**. What made it worse was the fact that it was *so* damn hot inside, and I was still lugging around the same big old blue rucksack I'd been carrying round with me the entire day. I *desperately* wanted to put it to one side, but Mobeen insisted I keep it over one shoulder for 'continuity' purposes.

I browsed through some of the rails of fetish gear and made half-assed comments to the camera like…

"Ooh now this is pretty cool."

And…

"This could work well in one of my cam shows!"

But I didn't buy a single thing while we were there. It wasn't that I didn't like anything that was on sale there – far from it in fact! I just found it all royally overpriced, and to be frank, I wasn't really in the mood for shopping. I had a brief, slightly forced chat with the guy at the counter who, it transpired, had seen me on **Cam4** broadcasting before.

"You're much shorter in real life," he said, in his thick Irish accent.

Thanks mate…

I was completely shattered by the time I arrived at the **Travel Lodge** that Jessica had pre-booked for me to stay in. I didn't arrive there till close to midnight (Mobeen having dropped me off), but instead of going straight to bed, I pottered around in the bathroom. I wanted to look as flawless as possible for the shoot with Matt Spike the following day, so I had a quick shave, tweezed my brows and applied another layer of self tanner to my face where I could see it was beginning to go patchy and fade.

Whilst I waited for the tan to develop, I sat on the kingside bed and had a quick flick through the TV channels, eventually settling on watching a re-run of the previous week's episode of '**The Apprentice**'.

I thought it was funny that here I was, taking part in a **BBC** show myself, and viewing another in my down time. I watched it with a critical eye and couldn't help but put myself in the contestant's shoes. '**Webcam Boys**' was in no way as big of a budget programme as something like '**The Apprentice**' was – but still, I wondered how

many retakes simple scenes like walking in and out of the boardroom would have taken, and paid closer attention to the edit than I normally would have.

I realised how easy it was to say one thing and mean another. And I wondered how I myself would be edited to appear when the show I'd signed up for went to air. I'd not met *any* of the other participants, so I genuinely had no idea who else had been cast, and what their background stories were.

Would I get less air time because they were more interesting than I was? Would I be painted as the weird creepy kinkster with an unexplained fetish for leather and latex?

I'd spent a lot of time with both Jess and Mobeen over the last few days, and they didn't seem in any way intent on screwing me over, but even from as far back as day one there was always this little niggling piece of doubt at the back of my mind – a voice that kept reminding me, 'these aren't your friends Joey, they have a TV show to make'. However friendly they seemed, I knew that if I gave them a reason to dislike me, however petty, they had the power to make me look like a fool in the editing suite.

And I know that the large majority of the British public, or at least those that watch these kinds of shows, have a tendency to take everything at face value and not consider any of what goes on behind the scenes. I admit that I've been guilty of it myself in the past – we're led to believe that what we see on screen is the whole truth, exactly as it happened, when in fact that isn't always the case.

The credits rolled and I checked the time. 1.30am. Check out time was 11am but I had to be ready to leave with Jess and Mobeen by 10. The photo shoot was to take place at Matt's that afternoon and I knew I had to be on top form for it.

I set my alarm for 9 so I had time to shower off my fake tan and smarten myself up in the morning. I then popped a couple of valium, and lay down in the centre of the bed until I fell asleep.

The next thing I knew, I was rudely awoken from whatever dream I was having by the shrill sound of my phone alarm, ringing in my ear.

'No way' I thought. 'No fucking way can it be 9am already.'

But of course it bloody was. I could have quite happily slept for another 6 hours, but I had a schedule to adhere to, and like it or not, I had to be packed, ready and all checked out in the next 60 minutes.

I poured myself a strong cup of coffee, layered up and went and sat outside on the front steps by the entrance to the hotel to light up a cigarette. Unfortunately I'd been designated a '**No Smoking**' room. Still, I never did *anything* in the morning without having had a coffee and a cigarette first, so if that meant I had to face the bitter cold outside then so be it!

After a quick cigarette, I dashed back to my hotel room, took a swift shower and made sure everything was all packed up nicely and that the room was as tidy (or as close as I could manage to tidy) as it had been when I'd arrived.

The next thing I knew it was **10am**, and Mobeen was ringing to check on my whereabouts.

"I'll be with you in a second," I said. "I'm just checking out now."

5 minutes later I'd handed in my key card at Reception and ventured outside once more to meet up with Mobeen and Jessica, who were parked just round the corner.

"*Morning* Joseph," Mobeen said.

"Hey guys," I said, still wiping the sleep from my eyes.

"How did you sleep?" Jess asked.

"Well," I replied. "And you?"

"Great" they both said – almost, but not quite, in unison.

"So what I was thinking…" said Mobeen. "What might be *really* cool, because we haven't done it yet, is if we call a black cab for you and Jess, and have her interview you in the back of that, whilst I follow behind in the car."

"Sure," I said.

I couldn't help but wonder in that moment if perhaps Mobeen had watched that re-run of '**The Apprentice**' himself, and was drawing inspiration from it, or if this had been the idea all along. Maybe Matt Spike would turn out to be Alan Sugar in disguise.

"Remember, today's all about putting the past behind you and looking towards the future," Mobeen clarified. "So try and let that come across in the interview."

I nodded, taking it all in.

"I'm sure you'll do fine."

"Taxi's here!" Jess called – she had an app on her phone to notify her of its arrival.

"Great, then I'll see you guys in a bit." Mobeen said.

Jess and I jumped into the taxi, she in the front passenger seat and me in the back seat with my rucksack to my left. She gave the driver the post code of our required destination, and clarified it was OK with him to film inside.

"I'm from the BBC," she announced, confidently. "Is it fine with you if I film while we're driving?"

"'slong as you don't get me on cam love."

With a face like hers how could *any* man refuse? If she'd have asked him if it was OK to release a crate of poisonous tarantulas inside his vehicle that she'd just smuggled back from a trip to the Australian outback he'd have probably obliged – so long as she made sure of it they didn't bite him…

We hit the road.

"So Joseph, what's happening today?"

"Today's a really big day, 'cause today I'm going to be doing a photo shoot, my first *ever* photo shoot actually, so that's gonna be in Soho with this guy called Matt Spike who does a lot of like, fetish photography."

"And how are you looking forward to it? Are you nervous, excited?"

"A bit of both. Yeah, I'm a little bit nervous, but also pretty excited. Up until now I've been kind of operating as like a one man band – producing and editing all my content myself, or with the help of my boyfriend. So I think today's a big step towards the future, and hopefully it's gonna further my profile online and prove to be a positive thing."

"Excellent."

We'd arrived at our destination. Jess thanked the driver for letting her film in his car, and we both hopped out of it to regroup with Mobeen.

After taking a few standard 'walking' shots of me making my way to the ground floor entrance of the building, we headed inside.

Though he lived on the floor below it, Matt's photography studio was right at the top of several flights of stairs, so it was a bit of a mission for the three of us to get all that we needed up there.

As with Steve, they wanted us to meet for the first time 'on camera', which meant I had to sit awkwardly on the stairwell just outside while they introduced themselves, got him to sign a few papers and mic'd him up.

Then Mobeen called out for me. I trotted up the final flight of stairs and into view to greet Matt, who was sitting at his desk with something between a smile and a smirk on his face.

"Alright?"

"Hey what's up?" I said. "Pleased to meet you."

"Yeah, *finally,*" he said, as we both shook hands.

Awkward introductions out of the way, I unzipped my rucksack and emptied out the collection of fetish gear I'd brought along with me – all the way from Wales.

The first look he wanted to shoot, against a grungy backdrop he had set up, was of me dressed in leather. I had a harness, jock strap and boots packed with me, but was a little embarrassed to admit that I didn't actually own a leather jacket of my own.

"Not to worry," he said, loaning me one of his.

I could tell just from the feel of it that it was premium quality. It must have cost him a fair bit of money.

All geared up – with a few fairly heavy duty chains around my

neck and fingerless leather gloves for that extra grungy sex appeal, I took my place in front of the backdrop. Matt fiddled around with the umbrella lighting till he was confident with the set up, and then starting snapping away at me with his camera.

For the first one or two frames I stood there rather awkwardly, not quite knowing what to do with myself.

"I feel like I wanna like, grab the jacket like this," I said, pulling the fabric in tighter towards me with my elbows outstretched.

"Yeah man, just feel it out," he said. "These are only test shots, no pressure."

He took note of my muscular thighs and had me tense them in a way that would highlight them best, and explained, without being patronising in *any* way, shape or form, a few good positions to aim for when angling my face in order to make the most of the light.

We took some shots of me smoking a cigarette, still in the leather get-up, and I must admit that I rather enjoyed inhaling and exhaling to the beat of Matt's camera.

"That's awesome," he'd say. "Little to the left… yeah that's looking hot!"

He was so encouraging and made me feel confident and at ease. It hardly felt like work at all. I'd seen his portfolio beforehand and knew what a talent he had for capturing great images, but the other models all seemed to know what they were doing, whereas I was a complete and utter novice. I'd been expecting to come across looking stiff and awkward in every shot, but looking over them with him afterwards at his computer screen, there were very few I strongly disliked, if any at all. For once I wasn't afraid to admit it, I looked *good*!

He insisted I was a natural, but I don't think I could have ever taken those shots without his superb direction.

"Right," he said stroking his bearded chin. "If we shoot one more outfit? I'll let you decide which."

I immediately opted for the backless black and red striped singlet. It was something of my trademark 'performance outfit' when camming, and my favourite of all that I'd brought along with me.

"Sometimes I like to take my camera out with me into the streets," Matt declared. "The lighting's looking pretty good out there today wouldn't you say? There's a few nice spots I know of round here where we could shoot you at for sure, lots of graffiti on the walls, that kinda thing, yeah?"

I stared at him vacantly. Was this a serious invitation?

"So… are you up for that?"

I changed into my singlet, and laughed.

"I can't go out dressed like *this!*"

"Sure you can! Just throw some clothes on over the top and when

we get to where we wanna shoot you at then you can just slip 'em right off."

His confidence and 'don't give a fuck' attitude was admirable and infectious, I had to admit, but I felt like he'd forgotten that the TV cameras were there, so I looked over to Jess and Mobeen for their approval. We had a two to three hour slot to shoot in and had only been at Matt's for about 45 minutes, so time wasn't an issue.

"Alright," I said confidently. "Let's do it!"

I quickly put on some comfy jogging bottoms – which looked like fetish wear alone with the glossy black material they were made from, tucked them into my biker boots and threw the jacket I'd rocked up wearing on to cover my top half.

"I think we're missing something," Matt said, looking me up and down. "Come with me."

He led me downstairs and took me over to where there was a collection of flat peak caps displayed on his mantelpiece. He picked out the leather one for me to wear.

"What do you think?" he asked.

"Looks great," I said, admiring my own reflection in the mirror.

"It does," he agreed. "Right. I think we're ready then."

We stepped outside, chatting casually with one another as Matt sought out 'the perfect spot' to shoot at, and Jess and Mobeen raced ahead to capture on film each step of our walk through the central streets of Soho. None of the onlooker's glares seemed to faze Matt at all. I think he liked the attention we were getting; two alternative looking guys (Matt's look at least was very much alternative – with his cropped Mohican-strip hairstyle and tattooed neck and arms) strolling around town with a TV crew latched on to us. He took it in his stride.

The remainder of the photo shoot went just as well as the first half indoors had, and working alongside Matt, we were able to get some really edgy looking shots together – even if at times it meant my rear end was exposed to passers by and my nipples got erect in the cold!

I can't wait to work with Matt again some time in the future. I've collaborated with a few photographers since, but out of all of them, he really knew how to get the best out of me. Quick and efficient, he really does have an eye for capturing the perfect shot and is a true professional in every sense of the word.

I was leaving the photo shoot on a high, but it was a sad time for me because it meant I'd also be heading back home to Monmouthshire and saying goodbye to both Jess and Mobeen, who had been by my side the entire time. It was somewhat bizarre to think that we'd only known each other for a matter of days – but even in that short time, working so closely together, they really did feel like family to me.

I'd left London before in many states, few of which I'm proud of – but this time, sitting on the train as it departed from Paddington, I felt just like any other passenger. I wasn't coming down from a heavy meth binge, nor was I dreadfully hung over or sleep deprived. Though I'd cursed and moaned when my alarm went off that morning, and was nervous that I didn't have it in me to take a good photo, that Sunday truly was the best day on-set. All the stress of being a part of the documentary was over with, and now I could finally relax.

TEN – Backlash and Betrayal

Returning back home to Monmouthshire after such a hectic time with Jess and Mobeen was like stepping off of a rollercoaster going 100 miles per hour. Although I'd often moaned about the early starts and the amount of scenes that I was required to participate in for the shoot, without someone to hold me to a schedule I almost felt a little bit lost.

I *do* remember enjoying the freedom though when I first returned to camming a few days after settling back down. There were no pre-performance nerves whatsoever. Instead I was just happy to chat with my regulars, have some fun, and be able to set my laptop up where *I* wanted it – really making the most of all the space in the room, and not just one small area of it. It truly made me fall in love with and appreciate camming all over again.

It was **late December** and that meant Christmas was fast approaching, followed by my 23rd birthday on the 6th January and then my mums 60th on the 10th.

For my mum's birthday (as it was such a big milestone in her life), we hired a table at a local Indian restaurant with a great reputation, and had her show up under false pretences for a big surprise party! All of our close family who were able to make it were there – my dad, my brother, his girlfriend April, my Nana Edythe and a few of my mum's dearest friends from work. It was a wonderful evening.

On top of all that there was lots more cause for celebration – my brother James was due to be a dad in May, and April's bump was growing bigger and bigger each time that I saw them! It really was a special time for the two of them – their first child together, and naturally I was thrilled for them both, as were the rest of the family.

With all of the family celebrations going on, the whole experience of taking part in '**Webcam Boys**' seemed almost like a distant memory already. That was, until the show had an official broadcast date, **February 3rd**, and TV guides began to promote it. I was first made aware of it when Paige had tagged me in a Facebook post with an accompanying photograph (one from the Matt Spike photo shoot) followed by a short summary of the upcoming show in '**What's on TV**'.

It read…

> '**A growing look at the webcam sex industry, following Joseph (pictured) and three other men as they attempt to earn a living in this billion-pound business.**'

It was closely followed by more magazine summaries (though they all said essentially the same thing), and a televised advert to promote **BBC3**'s '**One Click Away'** season, which I was featured in, albeit in a 'blink and you'll miss it' little cameo.

I'd publicly outed myself as a webcam performer on Facebook a little while prior to all the promotion kicking in to gear, and though I'd set up a separate 'fan page' (or rather Steve had) under my camming username '**Jmatt93**', I would still occasionally share posts that I felt were relevant on my main account.

It was *exciting* to open magazines and see my picture in them, and so *of course* I was going to promote the show, despite having not yet seen it myself.

My brother and April were both friends with me on Facebook, as was my Nana Sylvia (my father's mum), but I never made a point of hiding any of the posts from them.

They all led busy lives of their own, so I wasn't sure how much they knew or had seen or heard themselves, but I'd certainly made no secret of my involvement in the documentary. And besides – after it aired people were going to be talking about it anyway, (for better or for worse) so what would be the point in trying to keep it concealed?

When **February 3rd** finally came around, I was a bundle of nerves and excitement, all rolled into one. '**Webcam Boys**' wasn't set to air till **10pm** in the evening, so I had the whole day to pace around the house in anticipation – trying to keep myself occupied with small menial tasks in the hope that time might pass by faster, but being unable to concentrate on any one of them for any significant amount of time.

At 1.15pm in the afternoon, I was caught off guard, when a lengthy Facebook message popped up from my Nana Sylvia…

> 'You probably won't like what I'm about to say to you, but I for one will not be watching you on TV tonight, as I am so ashamed of you! I know that you're in to pain and power (*by this I think she's referring to sadomasochism*) and there are lots of people who have the same perversion. I personally don't like it but then again who am I to judge? I respect their choice so long as it doesn't interfere in my life… but when it interferes in the life of a loved one I am very angry. I understand you need, and crave publicity at any cost. You certainly have no respect for your parents… and you like to give as much pain to your family for your pleasure – your mum, who holds your hand every time you fall and who spends all her life pondering to all your whims…. There are drug addicts in every walk of life that get by day by day in

their own little world, but unfortunately you are also a publicity addict as well. This reflects on your family, and sadly can't say friends as I honestly don't think you have any true friends! As a grandson I love you, but as a person I don't like you, I don't think you even like yourself. Maybe one day it will sink in and you will grow up to be a likeable person, as it's now I can't foresee this, I only hope one day you will prove me wrong.'

After reading through all she had to say, I was, understandably in a state of distress and shock. As good as I am at times with written words, a Facebook response didn't seem like nearly enough. I felt like the best thing to do would be to call her right away upon reading it, and hash things out over the phone. There was a lot she didn't know (I hadn't seen her in several years) and I felt that she was judging me *far* too harshly without being aware of a lot of the facts. That said, like anyone, she was entitled to her opinion and had raised a few fair points. I just thought the whole tone of her message was scathing and callous.

We managed to talk things over on the phone without any voices being raised on either side, but I still felt a lack of understanding on her part, and at times it seemed as if all my justifications for doing what I do were falling on deaf ears.

"Why can't you just be Joe Bloggs?" I remember her saying to me at one point. "Why do you have to put your family through all this?"

"Because I'm *not* Joe Bloggs," I replied defiantly. "And I never will be."

I knew deep down that the real root cause of the problem Sylvia had with me was a little closer to home than she'd care to admit to. It certainly would make her own life an awful lot easier if I was closer in personality to my brother James – the man who was about to bring life into the world in the form of her first great grandchild, the man with a girlfriend, a 9 to 5 supermarket job, a steady income and plans for the future…

But as much as she so obviously wanted the same, or similar for me, I knew that it just wasn't in the cards, and felt that I had to remain true to myself. I could *never* be my brother – but that was OK. If she couldn't accept that, then I'm sorry to say that it was, and continues to be her problem, not mine.

As for 'putting my family through all this' – I'm not entirely sure quite what she meant by that. *Yes*, I've put my family through a lot, particularly with my drug addiction over the years, and *no,* I don't feel proud of that in any way, shape or form. But for the most part I've come out of it the other side, and though my dad keeps his distance

when it comes to the particulars of my endeavours, I have nothing but love and respect for the opportunities that both my parents have given me. In allowing me to utilise the outhouse as my cam room, even if they *don't* agree with what I'm doing, it's keeping me out of imminent danger and giving me the chance to save up – to one day move out and get the independence I crave. I don't sign on at the dole, I rarely ask either of them for cash, and if I do it's usually because I'm waiting for one of my cheques to clear, and I always make a point of paying them back as soon as I'm able to. *Is that so bad of me?*

We ended the phone conversation on a somewhat mutual 'agree to disagree' note (if there's one thing Sylvia and I have in common, I suppose it's that we're both as stubborn as each other!), but obviously my nerves towards the reception I might receive in general following the documentary's airing were magnified ten-fold after my discussion with her. '**Webcam Boys**' hadn't even been broadcast yet, and already I was facing backlash, from my own flesh and blood no less.

When the time came, I watched the documentary at home in the living room, with my mum. To some that might sound awkward, but if you understood the tight-knit relationship my mum and I share, then you'd recognise where I'm coming from when I say that it really wasn't all that uncomfortable at all viewing it alongside her.

The opening titles burst on to the screen, with Mobeen's distinctive voice narrating throughout, and as the show began we were introduced firstly to Will and Martyn, two 22 year old lads from Bournemouth who claimed to have been camming since the age of 16.

Both boys insisted that they were heterosexual, and that their particular audience liked the idea of two straight lads being comfortable enough in their own sexuality to be in the same room together naked (although *never* touching one another-something both men were adamant about, despite clips in the documentary suggesting otherwise) – but the programme alluded rather heavily that there might well have been something more to their working relationship than that.

Personally I'm not here to judge *anybody* on their sexuality, but let's just say they both lit up my gaydar…

Also featured on the programme was 23 year old Pete, a (believably) straight guy with a girlfriend and a child to support. He'd recently been laid off work and was trying out his luck for the first time within the 'muscle domination' scene; a burly lad looking older than his years, I imagined from the onset he had the potential to be

successful (it *is* a popular fetish!). But he himself seemed surprised and a little off-put to say the least by quite how much of a gay following he attracted with his camming profile (what did he expect?). Lets just say, with all due respect (because there was *plenty* endearing and likeable about the guy), he certainly didn't come across as the sharpest tool in the box, and seemed way out of his depth…

Finally there was me.

My introduction piece – voiceover courtesy of Mobeen, opened with…

"Hidden away in the Welsh valleys, is a rising star of the British webcam world. 5 nights a week Joseph transforms into J Matt, an A-list cammer who's starting to gain celebrity status in the camming world."

Cut to the footage of me on my sun bed, chain smoking, and then a quick montage of me showing off a few of my fetish outfits in the cam room.

I actually quite liked my introduction. Although I can totally see how it might've raised a few eyebrows, it summed me up rather well I thought.

Next was me in my element, performing in front of the webcam. I think this was the part I was dreading the most (particularly watching with my mum!), what they would show and what they wouldn't, but a lot of it made use of clever angles and *suggested* what was going on as opposed to actually *showing* it in full graphic detail – this, at least, I was grateful for…

Mobeen later told me via a phone call that there was a clip of me deep-throating my dildo he'd included in a montage that he thought to be really skilful, but that had to be cut at the last minute as a result of the health and safety team (or whatever group governs that part of the edit) implying that it might promote asphyxiation. Probably not something I should be proud of, but upon hearing that I genuinely thought it was beyond hilarious!

After the scenes of me performing in my cam room were over, there was a cut to 'the morning after the night before', where I was casually discussing with my mum in the kitchen how my show had gone and showing her for the first time my magazine spread.

I've written about this already, and there's not much else to add really – my edit up until now had been fairly accurate, and I wasn't displeased with how I was coming across. Although I won't lie – Mobeen's constant referral to my 'cam room' as 'a shed' pissed me off a little bit, and made me seem like a bit of a gypsy. It's an *outhouse* Mobeen – just to clarify.

The scenes with Paige were cut (as again, I've mentioned already), but I was *really* disappointed to find that Steve too had

ended up on the cutting room floor. The scene at the Mud Dock café was nowhere to be found in the final edit, and as I recall, the only mention of him whatsoever was in a brief text summary at the end that read, '**Joseph continues to cam with the support of his parents. He has been dating one of his cam fans for 4 months.**'

I understand the nature of television, and with several other participants' stories to be told, I'd be stupid to think that everything I shot with Jessica and Mobeen would be featured, but I was more upset for Steve than anything. I knew how nervous he was that day. To just cut him out of my life like he didn't even exist was pretty cruel, I thought, when he was, and is *still*, such a crucial part of it.

But I could see that I was, to an extent (at least more so than the other guys featured) being given the 'loner' edit. I'm not criticising Mobeen or any of the editing team for making the choice to do this, because I'd been the only one (to my knowledge) to open up about having had issues with drugs and dealt with abuse, so it would make sense that by finding solace in the world of camming, I might be quite an isolated, cynical individual as a result. It's not entirely untrue, but it's kind of sad when the only scenes of me interacting with people that made it into the documentary are with my mother, and Matt Spike, the photographer.

Nevertheless, if there's one thing I'm grateful for, it's the final five minutes of the documentary. I would urge *anyone* who wants to get a better understanding of me (but is put off by the raunchiness of my cam shows) to solely watch just that *one* segment alone. It's truly me at my rawest, most vulnerable and real.

During filming, Jessica and Mobeen had asked me to choose an area of London that was particularly significant to me – somewhere I'd spent a lot of time and that held a lot of memories, most of which were admittedly quite painful to discuss…

Did they do this to get an emotional reaction out of me and provide some extra drama for the show? Probably. But I wanted to tell as much of my story as I could; even if that meant owning up to some things that I wasn't entirely proud of. And so that monologue at the end, where I was given an opportunity to truly express myself and retell some of the stories from my past, without any cheesy cutaways or narration, just me standing by a street sign – I will *forever* be grateful for.

Despite a few minor gripes here and there, I was, overall, happy with my portrayal in '**Webcam Boys**', and since the show aired I have received a great deal of support from both friends, and even complete strangers for letting the cameras into my life, and sharing my story. It really has been overwhelming and has touched me in so many ways; I can't even begin to put into words how much it means to me to have

so much support behind me.

But as open as I was to share that side of me, and inspire others who had experienced similar, particularly in terms of the abuse I suffered during my time in London, there was – as I was expecting, a fair share of negativity and backlash too, following the shows broadcast…

The first I knew of it was when I realised that my brother had blocked me on Facebook. It transpired that he'd posted a long rant in regards to the programme (without having seen it himself, at least at this point, might I add) that, from what I gather, was basically in line with what my Nana Sylvia – who he'd recently been to visit, had commented on prior to it's airing.

James and I have never been particularly close I should clarify, but I felt we had both reached a point in our lives where we were adults now and more accepting of one another. So to have him bash me so publicly in such a way as he did, and to then even go as far as to block me, his own brother, on social media – that was a real kick in the teeth.

I can't quote from his rant as I only read it myself once briefly via a mutual friend, but there were 'likes' aplenty, and no shortage of hateful comments directed towards me. I don't know how many of those who chimed in had actually seen the show through to the end, but it was a brutal onslaught to say the least, and the worst part was knowing that there was absolutely nothing I could do to stop it.

Some even went as far as to message me personally on Facebook. People I didn't even *know*, but who were friends with my brother had it in for me. I won't name names, but here's one such message I received (I cleaned up some of the spelling and grammar errors to make it easier to read).

> 'Mate, to be fair you're fucking disgusting! How can you do that in a small village? You have let local people and your family down. Go back to Soho if you're going to do that, people like you disgust me.'

I sent a lengthy reply explaining that London would have essentially been the death of me, and that I didn't feel I was harming anyone by doing what I do.

Let's take a step back and think about this seriously for a moment. *Who* are the people that fund my career? Other people's brothers, sons, uncles, fathers and grandfathers… I wouldn't earn a *dime* if it wasn't for them tipping and paying my way. And if I'm making them happy while I'm at it, whilst keeping myself out of danger, then where's the harm in that?

I later learned that some of the neighbour's gripes with the show

were in how much of the village was displayed, particularly houses which could be seen in the background of the 'tyre swing' segment.

If there's one thing I'm slightly irked by (aside from the 'shed' label – not letting that one go), it's how much of my location was revealed in the final edit. You could quite easily establish exactly where I lived, right down to the house number, from the clues shown in the documentary, and *that* I felt let down by – particularly as my one request was for my location to remain as secretive and anonymous as possible.

I can understand how neighbours with children might feel upset or endangered by this, and all I can do is apologise. Though I didn't self direct the documentary and had no say in what was eventually screened, I take full responsibility for agreeing to take part, and can do nothing more than say sorry to anyone that felt pissed off by that; believe me, I did too.

Nobody likes reading or hearing hateful comments about themselves, least of all me. But I knew from the get go when I started my career as a webcam performer that it was part of the territory, and something I was going to have to endure – even more so when it came to taking part in the documentary.

But guess what? *Never* in my life have I felt more liberated now that the truth of what I do is out there for everyone to see. Coming out as gay was never as big of a deal for me as coming out as a cam boy was, but I have very few regrets about the way I handled it. People *know* what it is I do now. If they accept it that's fantastic, and if they don't? Well, it's probably because I'm earning more money than them (*haha!*) or they just don't understand it. It's really helped me sift through who's important in my life and who isn't. Saying that, I don't wish any harm upon my family and *do* hope to rebuild some of those bridges I may have unintentionally burned. But I understand that sometimes people need time to come around to things that aren't considered 'the norm' in society, and I'm willing to give them that.

All that said, I think I'm pretty qualified to offer up a few final tips on dealing with negativity and criticism, both in a general sense and in that of the camming world, so here's what I've got…

#TIP 10 – DEALING WITH NEGATIVITY AND CRITICISM

Remain Calm when responding to negative comments online – it's all too easy when someone throws shade your way to react in an aggressive manner as a means to defend yourself, but often the worst thing you can do is

rise to the bait and add fuel to the fire by arguing back right away. Anyone that leaves hateful comments is 9 out of 10 times looking for a reaction from you, so why provide them with it? Stay cool, calm and collected and take the time to process their criticisms and come up with a well thought out response if you feel the need to. Better yet, just don't respond at all. Trust me, that'll really piss 'em off!

Understand that no matter what, you can't please everyone – This applies to both the world of webcamming, and 'real life' as it were. There will always be someone who dislikes you, or what you're doing. Whether that's because it goes against their moral principles, because they hold a grudge over something you've said or done in the past, or simple old fashioned jealousy. If these are people that are important to you (in my case, family) then it's most definitely worth at least trying to talk things over and see eye to eye, but in the case of total strangers, or people who seem to find fault in everything you do, fuck it! Life's too short to waste your time on them. They're obviously unhappy with whatever's going on in their own lives, so feel the need to take it out on someone else. I've been dealing with these kinds of people since school. They have a name- bullies. Don't let yourself be their punching bag. Distance yourself and have as little to do with them as is humanly possible.

Don't be afraid to admit when you're wrong – For some, I know, this can be a bitter pill to swallow, but we aren't all perfect, and sometimes even the best of us make mistakes. Lord knows I've made more than my fair share over the years. It takes a fair amount of guts and a strong person to own up to their flaws and admit that they were wrong, but never be afraid to apologise if you feel you are, or were in the wrong. Anyone with a shred of decency will have a lot more respect for you as a person as a result of it. Not all criticism is bad; and try not to turn a blind eye to anyone offering it in the way of constructive advice. Not everyone is out to get you. Don't let the past define you, and focus on the future and bettering yourself as best as you can. In essence, learn from your mistakes.

ELEVEN – The dust begins to settle

A day after the backlash I received from my appearance on '**Webcam Boys**' I was given the opportunity to write a piece for '**Gay Star News**' under the title – '**I don't care who judges me – why I'm proud to be a Webcam Boy!**' – The title was defiant, to say the very least, but there were things I needed to get off my chest and clarify, for the sake of my own sanity if nothing else.

I'm not going to repost the whole thing here but here's a few extracts which I feel do me justice…

'In a virtual world where I quite often can't even *see* the men I'm performing for, I feel as though the webcam offers me a source of protection. Unlike escorting, there's no chance of being pinned down or overpowered by a guy, or potentially turning up for an out-call and finding myself in the home of an ill-intentioned sadist. There's no 'block' button in real life like there is online, and I'm in charge…'

'My parents are fully aware of what I do and while I don't think that realistically it's what anyone would want their child to be doing, they've kind of just grown to accept it for what it is. Other more distant family members have expressed in no uncertain terms that they're ashamed of me for putting myself and my body out there so publicly, for potentially the whole world to see and judge. But I think a lot of sex workers are misunderstood and people need to stop being so close-minded…'

'My response to any and all of my critics is that if they don't like what I'm doing then they don't have to watch. Nobody's forcing them. I, for example, have no interest in sci-fi, so why would I sit through Star Trek? I wouldn't. It's exactly the same in principle…'

I might have been angry at the time, but I do believe I got my point across loud and clear (though again, I'm not naïve enough to think that all of my critics will have read it, or agreed), and reading it back even now, there's absolutely *nothing* that I regret writing in that particular article.

I haven't received any hate mail in over a month now (touch wood!), and instead am inundated with support from my fans, both new and old, who all seem to have a new found respect for me after doing the documentary. Going into it, I was worried I might lose a few of my regulars, if they saw that the reality of my life wasn't quite as glamorous as I'd made it out to be at times, but fortunately that hasn't been the case at all!

I'll also admit that I was slightly worried about the reception my mum would receive. Agreeing to take part herself and admitting to having allowed me the out house as my 'office', knowing full well

what it was I was *really* doing in there, she was opening herself up to a lot of criticism, but I don't recall hearing from *anyone* with a single bad word to say about her or her style of parenting – quite the opposite in fact. My fans *adore* her – more so than me at times I worry! They always ask me when I broadcast how she's doing. I get messages all the time telling me what a great mother I have, for supporting me through my hardships and trying the best she knew how to save me from the brink of a drug addiction that probably would have otherwise killed me. One day I'll drag her on cam to say hello… but only when I'm fully clothed.

I don't think that I'll *ever* be able to repay her for all that she's done for me, and words really aren't enough, but when I look at her, I know that I am blessed.

My Nana Edythe (my mums' mother) has been equally supportive. Not in the sense that she knows the *full* extent of what I do, but she has a vague enough idea. I've tried to explain it to her in the sense that I put on performances in front of my webcam and get paid to do so, and I think she's smart enough to fill in the blanks. She tells me that as long as I'm happy and safe then it shouldn't matter what anybody else thinks. For a woman of 85, I think that's *such* a positive and admirable attitude to have. I know that despite some of the ill-fated choices I've made in my life that she loves me unconditionally, and that truly is the best kind of love of all.

My brother James still has me blocked on Facebook (even now I think it's probably too soon to attempt to re-add him) and as I don't see a lot of him it's hard to know where he currently stands with it all, but I admit that I would like at least *some* kind of a relationship with him, even if it's only the occasional catch-up. In truth, he'll probably always harbour a bit of a grudge towards me for exposing my work life on television, but he *is* my only brother after all, and blood is thicker than water as they say. I do hope this will all blow over and that I'm given the chance to be an uncle to his child, it would mean the world to me.

Nana Sylvia, perhaps surprisingly, hasn't ever taken it upon herself to block me on social media. I posted a selfie with my mum on Mothers Day of this year and she commented saying 'Lovely picture' – so I think that's progress and there's definitely room to mend that fractured relationship at least; although I don't know that she'll ever fully understand or accept my life choices. Honestly, it doesn't particularly bother me that she thinks I'm a publicity whore – in fact she's probably right on that count! But I don't feel like I should be pressured into feeling ashamed of what I do, and I don't consider myself a bad person because of it.

My cousin Amelie, who I haven't seen in years, but have recently

reconnected with over Facebook, has been very vocal about her support for me (having actually taken the time to watch the documentary from start to finish) in spite of some of the family's reactions, and for that I'm very thankful. It's nice to know she has my back!

I don't honestly know where I stand with regards to the rest of my family at the moment. But I do believe that time is a great healer, and perhaps by the time this book comes out, things will have changed dramatically. I certainly hope so.

TWELVE – Onwards and Upwards

I could quite honestly drag this book out for an eternity, but like all things, it must come to an end, and I feel that with the recent celebration of my one year camming anniversary (or '**Cammiversary**' as it's known in the camming world) this seems like the perfect place to finish.

So much has happened this past year. Looking back on it all, it almost seems surreal, like some weird kind of dream. To tell you the truth I'm half expecting to wake up any minute, back in Nick's dingy drug den, or somewhere equally revolting, but I've come *such* a long way since then – I'd be a fool to return to that kind of lifestyle.

I truly do feel blessed for all the wonderful opportunities that have come my way. Don't get me wrong, I've worked my arse off (quite literally) for a lot of them – but it's all been worthwhile.

Earlier this year, **Cam4** honoured me with '**VIP**' performer status, and a gold card to boot to prove it – and this month I'm the cover boy for gay magazine '**Prowler**', along with a double page interview spread about my experiences camming, and taking part in the TV documentary. None of this would have *ever* been possible had I not had the courage to switch on my webcam and give camming a go – even if I did only earn **$1.50** that initial night!

It's proven to me that with dedication, drive, and determination, anything is possible.

But of all the positive things to have come out of camming, my relationship with Steve *has* to have been one of the greatest. I know that that man would travel to the ends of the world and back just to make me happy, and I'm *so* grateful to have him in my life. I spend most of my weekends at his, and it's always hard to say goodbye come the end of it, but I really enjoy the time we spend together – he's like no other man I've dated before and truly does have my best interests at heart!

I wish I could say that I'm now completely drug free, but I do see a case worker two to three times a week and am slowly but surely dealing with getting over my dependence on benzodiazepines. Accepting help has been a *massive* step for me, and though at times it has honestly felt like banging my head against a brick wall trying to get a referral, I now have a team beside me who are helping me work through my issues, and the ongoing support of Steve and my parents.

I don't honestly know what the future holds for me, but even writing this book I feel has been a massive accomplishment, and I'm no longer afraid to take on new challenges, however daunting they may seem to be at first.

And as for anyone out there, who's seriously considering camming as a job, I hope this book and my tips have been helpful in offering you some guidance.

You can find me on **Twitter** at **Jmatt93cam** if you ever need any further advice. I'm always happy to help.

Finally, from the bottom of my heart, I'd like to say a big **MASSIVE** thank you – to all my fans, friends and family, who have stuck by me throughout all my trials and tribulations, and without whom I don't think I'd have found the strength to keep fighting.

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All my love

J